BRITISH GQ

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY

APRIL · 2018 ·

Rupert Murdoch's Final Chapter

By Michael Wolff

RACE SEX LOVE & POWER

When Naomi met Skepta

Photographed by An Le

IT'S TIME TO TALK

Why I'm now afraid of men
By Olive Pometsey

Can I still...?
By Jonathan Heaf

The problem with fake male feminists
By Stuart McGurk

Inside Oxford's consent courses
By Eleanor Halls

Music's Weinstein moment
By John Niven

+ With friends like these: what Mike Tyson taught Trump By Chris Ayres

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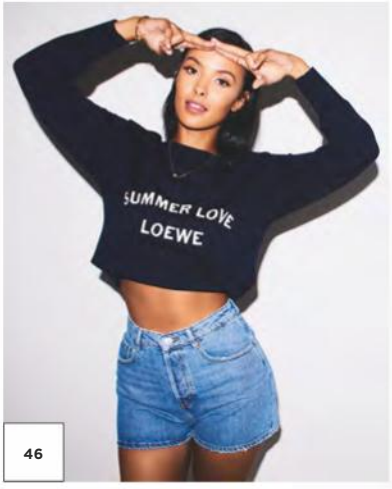

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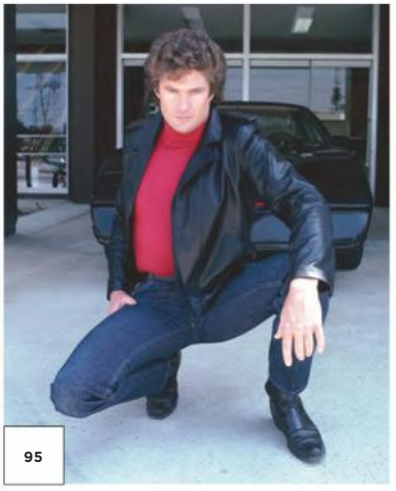
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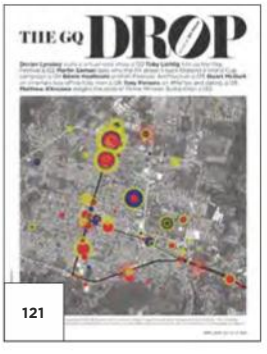

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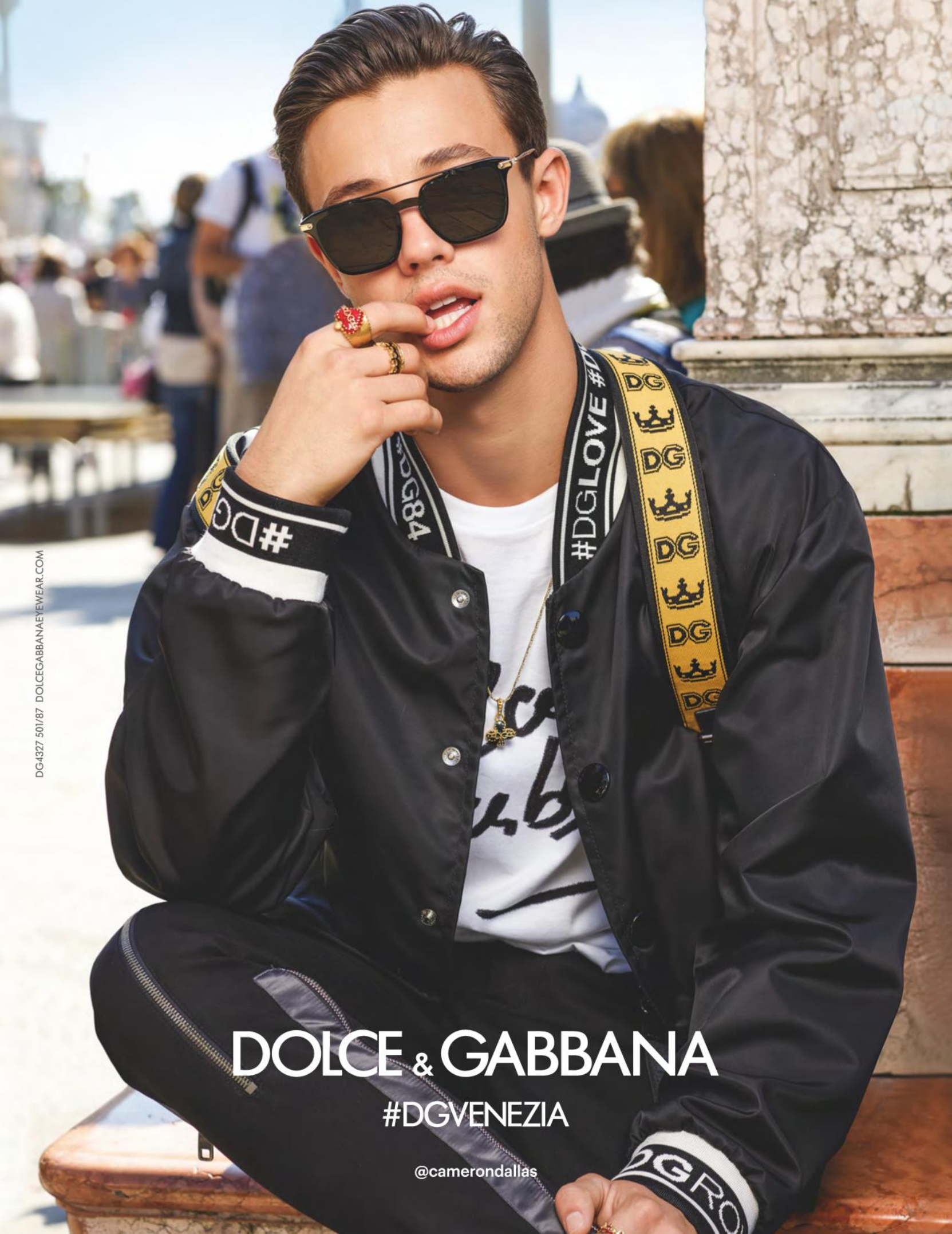
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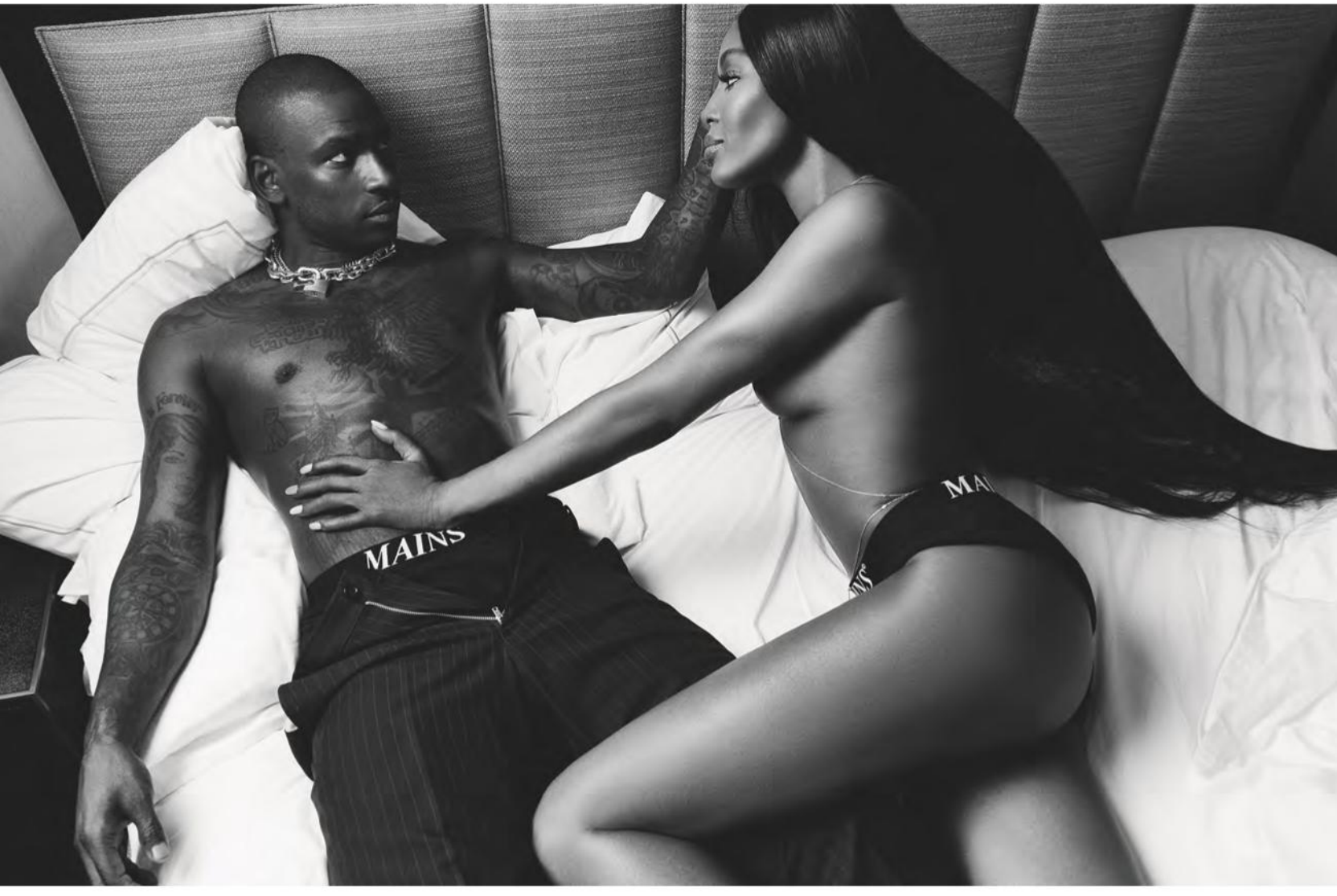

Skepta wears trousers by **Kingsman**, £1,495. At mrporter.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com
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Published by The Condé Nast Publications Ltd, Vogue House, Hanover Square, London W1S 1JU (tel: 020-7499 9080; fax: 020-7495 1679; telex 27338 volon). Printed in the UK by Wyndeham Group. Colour origination by williamsleatag. Published eleven times a year. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited. All prices correct at the time of going to press, but subject to change.

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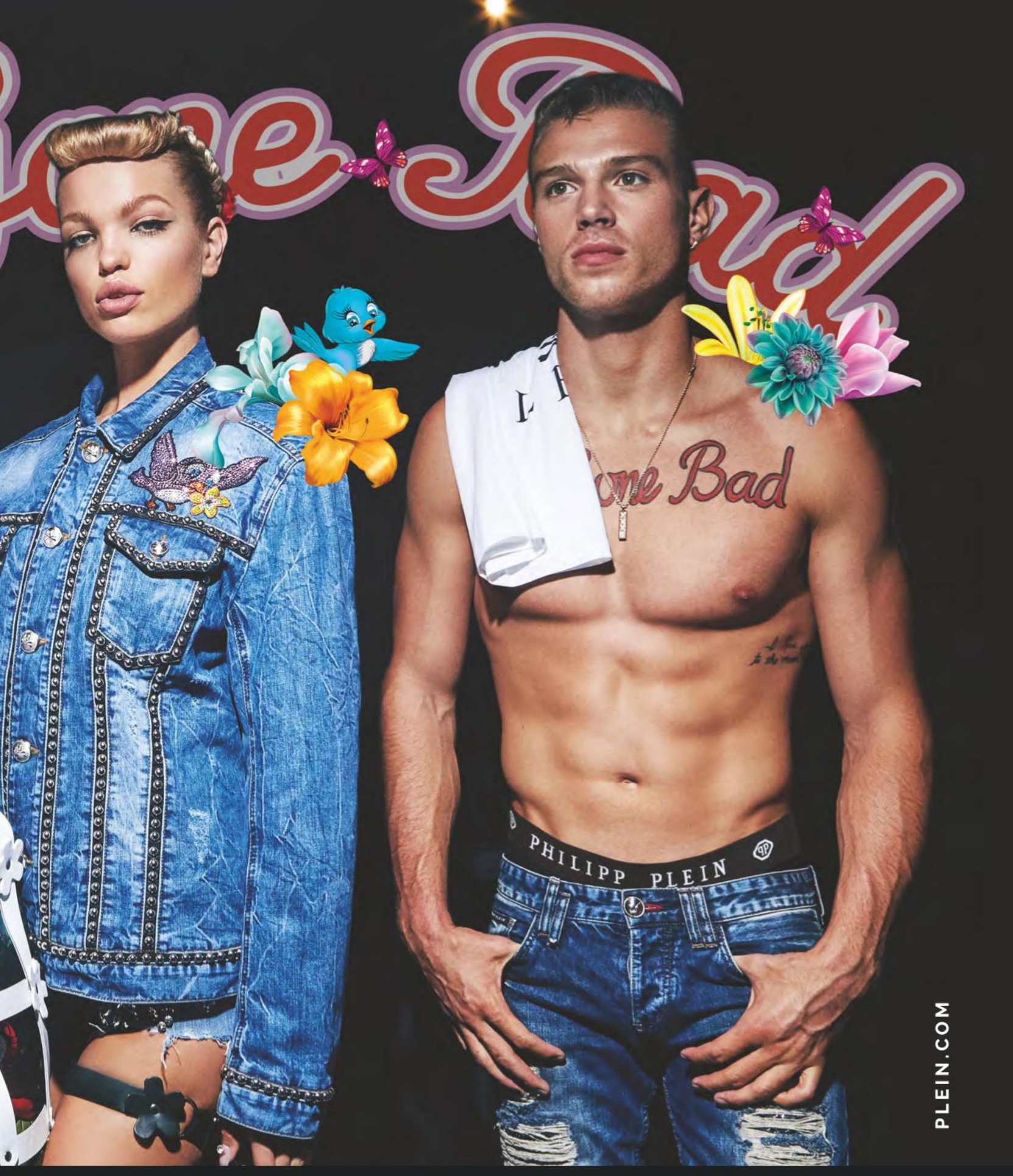

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EDITOR'S LETTER

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY

Michael Wolff photographed in London, 2015

PORTRAIT BY **David Bailey**

It was the early noughties when I first met Michael Wolff, at a Condé Nast conference in Venice. He was the star attraction, delivering a motivational (and rather inspirational) talk on the back of his successful 1998 book, *Burn Rate*, which was about his failed experiment as a digital entrepreneur.

He was a terrific, if slightly laconic, speaker and I loved him. We stayed in touch and would see each other occasionally when one of us was in London or New York. He always made a point of visiting Savile Row to stock up his wardrobe and was always the best-dressed diner in Claridge's. I was told not to trust him, not to tell him anything I wouldn't want anyone else knowing and certainly never to hire him.

So, obviously, I hired him. Michael, now 64, started working for *GQ* in 2010 when he was still writing for *Vanity Fair*, although I think both of us knew that his time there was nearing its end. Michael and I would gossip about everything – media, politics, society – but I rarely asked him about his professional relationships, not least because he was always falling out with people.

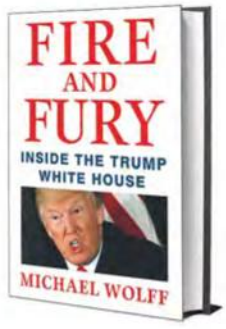
True to form, he fell out with the *Guardian*, left *Vanity Fair*, and I assumed that one day he would fall out with me. Heigh-ho, I thought, what the hell? He was a terrific journalist, always good company – he hosted a dinner party for me at his apartment once in New York and I was more than impressed by the number of media luminaries he managed to corral – and he wrote like a dream.

He would skewer anyone: *Rolling Stone*, Tina Brown, Vice, the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, Jeff Bezos, Uncle Tom Cobley. If you dared to stick your head above the parapet then at some point you'd see Michael on the other side of the drawbridge, about to launch a water cannon at you for a profile in the pages of our magazine.

He was fearless too, as his confrontation with Donald Trump and remarkable bestseller *Fire And Fury: Inside The Trump White House*, serialised in *GQ*, has shown.

Michael is, without doubt, the very best gossip in the business. Of course, by dint of its very nature, gossip is a slippery beast, the easiest way for conjecture to become fact. But isn't that why we gossip?

I was first told by Michael that he was writing a book about Trump at the beginning of last year. I was in New York for a dinner and we had breakfast in the midtown hotel where I was staying, just around the corner from Trump Tower. As we ate, it gradually dawned on me that he was claiming to have been granted access to the White House, where he would be spending the first 100 days of the new presidency.



Fire And Fury: Inside The Trump White House by Michael Wolff (Little, Brown, £20) is out now

When I asked how he had pulled off this feat, he replied it was something he had been trying to wangle for some time. When I asked him if they had actually ever read anything he'd written, and whether they were certifiably mad, he gave me a classic Michael Wolff look – making a face with his eyebrows and mouth without saying a word – the gist of which was plain to see: "Yup, they are damned fools, but let's keep that between ourselves, shall we?"

Over the next few months, I would receive emails, often at strange hours of the day, giving me titbits about what was going on in the Oval Office. I would be lying in bed reading when my phone would light up and there would be a message from Michael that said things such as, "Tony Blair has just walked into the White House" (which was weeks before the story of Blair's visit hit the press). He told me other things too, but these will remain between me and Michael. ››

» I saw him a few times before Christmas and he seemed relatively sanguine about the publication of the book. Michael had given *GQ* its own exclusive extract (which we quickly had to put online when the stories it contained began to break) and he talked in some detail about the launch. The UK publication of the book was initially planned to coincide closely with the anniversary of the inauguration, but its incendiary content forced an earlier, simultaneous release. As swiftly became clear, this book, this story, is one of the defining chapters of Trump's first year in office. The *New York Times* has observed that Michael Wolff is, right now, the most famous journalist in the world and rightly so. This is more than a coup; it's a *coup d'état*.

People associated with the Murdochs encouraged me to stop using Wolff

There were always certain stories that he couldn't do. There are two or three organisations that I've always thought would make good features for *GQ* but, like all of us, Michael has his favourites, his arrangements. There were relationships that he needed to foster in order to keep his job, plates that he needed to spin in order to carry on being Michael Wolff. This in itself is something of an art. If the work of a journalist is a combination of guile and craft, initiating and keeping relationships is something altogether more sophisticated and something that Michael is remarkably good at.

Not least because he has fallen out with more people than you can shake a stick at. And that includes, famously, Rupert Murdoch. When Michael wrote his biography of Murdoch, *The Man Who Owns The News*, ten years ago, he was celebrated and vilified in equal measure. He took repeated kickings from the Murdoch press. At the time, various people associated with the Murdochs on both sides of the Atlantic encouraged me to stop using him – some quite vociferously – but in my mind, this was the sort of contentiousness that made him a great journalist. This was business, I told friends who were trying to make me fire him, not pleasure. To be frank, it was pleasure as well, but mainly it was business.

In this issue Michael again addresses the Murdoch empire, analysing the media baron's decision to sell a vast swathe of his republic – most of his 21st Century Fox business, including its stake in UK broadcaster Sky and the 20th Century Fox film studio – to the Walt Disney Company for £45 billion. Wolff also looks at Murdoch's inability to successfully distance himself from the Trump regime. As he writes, "Murdoch media has, by the current rules of demographic targeting and political triangulation, found itself as the all-important supporter of Donald Trump."

Even though Murdoch tells anyone who will listen that he doesn't want to be blamed for Trump, the damage appears to have already been done. **GQ**

On the cover: Skepta and Naomi Campbell photographed by **An Le**

Dylan Jones

Dylan Jones, Editor

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When Naomi met Skepta...

Subscribe to our YouTube channel and see the sparks sizzle in our exclusive video footage of the pair's cover interview, shot by the only videographer they allowed in the room.

GQ Talks #MeToo

Let's talk some more

This month's #MeToo series began life as a digital editorial project, but the *GQ* team was so animated about the topic that it soon spread to the print magazine. Read more online now at GQ.co.uk.

Style, food, drinks, travel

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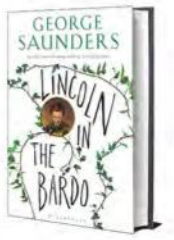

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Our most ruthless interviewer sinks his canines into the former Labour leader. Watch the full video on our YouTube channel and witness the interrogation first hand.

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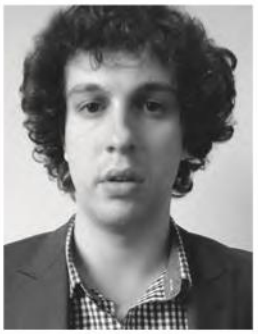
CONTRIBUTORS

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY

As society adapts to a post-Weinstein world, GQ called upon a roster of voices to examine the movement that is changing the way we act and feel

Olive POMETSEY

In an arresting personal essay, 23-year-old writer Olive Pometsey explains how the string of sex pests recently outed in the press has affected her day-to-day life, from getting on the Tube to ordering drinks in bars. "Fear is the accidental side effect of #MeToo for both men and women," she says. "It's important that we confront this fear head-on."



Chris STOKEL-WALKER

The Weinstein fallout is omnipresent in the London-based media, but what's been the impact elsewhere? Journalist Chris Stokel-Walker took to the streets of Newcastle to discover what lies beyond the media bubble. "I found a real sense that things have changed," he says. "Plus plenty of horrifying stories."

Eleanor HALLS

GQ Staff Writer and Oxford alumnus Eleanor Halls, who also wrote this month's cover feature, asks how her alma mater, which has more reports of sexual assault than any other UK university, is adapting to a post-Weinstein world. "I loved Oxford, but the problematic behaviour I encountered seemed normal," says Halls. "Now, I realise it wasn't."

John NIVEN

Author John Niven literally wrote the book on sleaze in the music business of the Nineties with 2008's *Kill Your Friends*, which did for A&R men what *American Psycho* did for bankers. Now, he asks why the industry is yet to have its cultural comeuppance. After all, he says, "You can feel the foot going down on the accelerator pedal of progress."

Helen LEWIS

It shouldn't just be up to women to challenge sexist behaviour, nor educate the perpetrators. On GQ.co.uk, writer Helen Lewis rails against the "bullshit tax" – the extra costs that sexism levy on women – and calls upon decent men to stop keeping quiet. As Lewis explains, "I wanted to write this piece because it's time for some honest, painful conversations."

Jonathan HEAF

If there's one question that has passed male lips more than others in the wake of Me Too, it's "Can I still...?" With the rules of gender relations being redrawn, *GQ* Features Director Jonathan Heaf asks it in every possible way. As he says, "Rather than going endlessly over past behaviour, this is a question men should be asking themselves about their future conduct."

Amelia TAIT

A misogynist will always speak more freely behind a keyboard, which can make dating apps an unpleasant place for women. *New Statesman*'s technology and digital culture writer, Amelia Tait, examines how apps are catching up to Me Too. "The same technology that allows people to abuse one another," says Tait, "can be reclaimed to end online harassment."

Teo van den BROEKE

Abuse in the fashion industry has occurred for decades, says *GQ*'s Style And Grooming Director, Teo van den Broeke, but "It's only in the past year that it's started coming to light." Broeke spoke to some of those affected and heard, "often for the first time, about their experiences. It was also telling that even now, many are still afraid to go on the record."

Kathleen JOHNSTON

At 18, jetting off with friends on a package holiday to Magaluf or Ibiza was a rite of passage. For GQ.co.uk, Social Content Editor Kathleen Johnston investigates how the travel industry has adapted to the news cycle. "From the big tour operators to Brits working abroad," says Johnston, "I asked where responsibility begins and ends." GQ

Photographs Getty Images; Thalia Renucci

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STORY BY

Stuart McGurk

The problem with fake male feminists

For all the damage done by Weinstein and co, the crimes of 'Mr Nice Guy' can be more insidious

There's a great *Saturday Night Live* sketch, screened before the Harvey Weinstein allegations, early last year, in which a woman is alone at a bar, waiting for a friend.

A guy turns up, asks if he can take the seat next to her, pre-empts her concern about it ("I'm not, like, a gross guy trying to hit on you or anything… I just can't find a seat") and, after she half-jokes that the whole world is full of gross guys, he makes a joke about Donald Trump ("I… think our president is one") with the satisfied expression of someone who has just invented cheese.

Soon enough, it turns out they're both wearing the same feminist T-shirt and he asks her out, but she says no. "OK, bitch!" he shouts. "I wore this T-shirt and you won't even let me nut? I followed all the rules!" Cue a succession of guys, each apologising for the last, each explaining how they've just been on a march or worked for Hillary, and each exploding with fury when she won't sleep with him. "I fucking marched for you!"

It's not hard to decide who the worst people to be outed by the Me Too movement are – the ones who've raped and the ones who've assaulted – but what about the ones you're most disappointed by?

For me, it's often examples of all those guys at the bar, the so-called feminists who barely have time to tweet out their righteous condemnations before they realise their own names are trending too.

People such as Louis CK, the comic who so recently had a brilliant skit about the objective madness of women even dating men ("'Yeah, I'll go out with you, alone, at night.' What are you, nuts? 'Hi, where are we going?' To your death, statistically") and whose idea of a good time was to masturbate in front of unwitting women.

People such as *Mad Men* creator Matthew Weiner, who literally wrote a show about sexual harassment and objectification in the workplace and was accused of the same – allegations he denies.

People such as the comedian Aziz Ansari, who wrote a book called *Modern Romance*, only to have an account surface of his coercive persistence while on a date with a 22-year-old student.

Ansari's story is very much the thinnest end of the wedge, of course – being a randy douche is not a criminal offence – but it does, for me, encapsulate a subsection of men who enrage me almost as much as the Weinsteins of this world.

The ones who, like the guys at the bar, wear the feminist T-shirts, boast about the marches, can't wait to talk about feminism and mention feminism and say what a feminist they are (but only when women are around) and whose actual behaviour is some of the worst. The wankers in suffragette clothing.

To most men, Me Too has also meant something subtler: could it be me… too?

The ones, who – and we know who they are – think nothing of writing hot takes about how awful Weinstein is while spamming women on Twitter for sex.

To most men, of course, Me Too has also meant something subtler. Namely: could it be me… too?

Most of us know, naturally, that ass-slapping, knee-clasping, dick-picing and calling someone "super-tits" are not acceptable forms of behaviour. Classes shouldn't need to be held in which men are told not to grind their groins against women on the tube. A memo should not need to be written that points out grabbing someone's anything is not OK. You shouldn't need a hashtag to tell you not to assault people

But it has meant, as a friend of mine recently put it, going through the mental Rolodex in your head of every sexual encounter you've ever had, every drunken pass you've ever made, every flirty text you've ever sent, every kiss you've ever lunged in for, every time you can't quite remember bits of the night before and said to yourself, "God, did I do something wrong? Did I ever cross a line?"

It's not so much guilt (it's a little bit guilt) as worry; not so much shame (it's a little bit shame) as concern. It's not the feeling that the rules have changed – because what did you think the rules were? – but that we never paid enough attention to the fine print.

Have I dated someone ten years my junior? Yes, once. Have I dated someone »

What was Harvey if not every rotten male impulse writ large?

[redacted]

[redacted]

» less senior than myself at work? Yes, twice. Have I slept with someone I interviewed for work? Yes. Have I, in turn, slept with someone who met me for work drinks to ask if I'd freelance for her newspaper? Yes. Did any of those cross lines? I don't think so. Don't people nearly always meet through work? But now I worry. Was all of that… OK?

Yet this is the way it should be, of course; this is the way things change. The fabric of life is not made up of Harvey Weinsteins running every company and mass-booking into every hotel. But, rather, it's made up of otherwise decent men occasionally acting far from decently. And what was Harvey if not simply every rotten male impulse writ large – just amplified by fame, multiplied by ego, protected by power, unmoored to morality.

But the more I think about it, the more I realise the guys currently engaged in an ungodly cross between sensitive soul-searching and panicked evidence-shredding are unlikely to be the problem.

We're not saying we don't have desires, but we're also not pretending to be marionetted by them either.

When I profiled the Oscar-winning screenwriter Charlie Kaufman for this magazine, he said something that stuck with me. When he first started working in TV writers' rooms in his mid-thirties (Kaufman was something of a late bloomer) he was appalled by how these young men in their twenties (they were nearly always men) treated the support staff, runners and assistants who were often female. These men, Kaufman pointed out, had never known anything other than privilege and power, and so, he told me, "It was like they didn't see them as people. They fundamentally didn't see them as people."

I think about this every time I hear another story from a woman about male harassment from someone you'd think would know better.

Just the other day, a journalist friend described how a photographer she'd recently done a job with began texting her, then calling her when she stopped replying to the texts, then announcing he was in her neighbourhood via voicemail when she wouldn't take his calls, and did she fancy dinner?

My first thought is always: why isn't he ashamed? Doesn't he care what she thinks of him? Why isn't he *embarrassed*? But then, of course, embarrassment always takes two, doesn't it? It requires you to care what the other person thinks of you. It requires you to think of them as a person at all.

It's true for every supposed male feminist who has been caught in Me Too scandals, from men mass-messaging on social media to Louis CK's masturbating, the individuals involved are almost irrelevant; the act, the conquest, the dominance is all.

The crime for these fake male feminists isn't just hypocrisy – at its most forgivable, hypocrisy is just idealism with pragmatism whispering in its ear; the MP who believes in improving state schools, but would rather not send little Casper to the one with the reputation around the corner – but a kind of treachery.

It's the sure knowledge they understand something completely – the really stupidly simple idea that women and men have the same rights – and then just don't give a shit. That, despite their proclamations to be a feminist, they're almost the opposite. They almost don't think they're people.

It makes them worse than those for whom the word "feminism" has never passed their lips. Because at least those people – those who, for better or worse, simply allow themselves to be a product of their past – have the excuse of ignorance. What's theirs?

There is no excuse here, nothing to hide behind, no camouflage for it. Their fathers didn't raise them this way, this isn't what happened in their day, this is not due to their culture or religion or their race or their creed. They're just assholes. Correction: they're some of the worst assholes.

The excuse, when these people are outed, is often that they need to learn. They're going to need to go away and take stock. Pray, tell, I always wonder, what lessons do they need to learn? What part of the introductory lecture to existence did they miss? What part of the fact that we're all humans with fears and desires and flesh that gives us both pleasure and pain passed them by? Which bit of that, I wonder, will be news?

I have many female friends. I know what some men do. The friend who was in a train carriage and realised the man opposite her was masturbating (she took a picture of him on her phone and he fled). The friend who refuses to get the morning tube, who gets up nearly an hour early to take a painfully slow bus, because of how often men use the sway of each stop to commit sexual assault before breakfast. The friend who was raped.

But I only realise now how naive I've been. How I've always subconsciously segregated these guys from the kind of guys I'd be friends with. After all, how could they be? They're in the pen marked "Creepy blokes – Rapists". But, of course, that's not true, and it never has been.

That same male friend, by the way, who worried about his mental rolodex (and the kind of guy, with all the irony attached, who has nothing to worry about), is also now so paranoid about the entire Me Too movement that he refuses to put anything of a personal nature in email. And I mean anything. Forget chat about who we find attractive or who's sleeping with whom; he's convinced himself his opinions on Jeremy Corbyn or Premier League football results will somehow, when leaked, see him at the centre of a worldwide Twitter storm. Now, the only thing he'll commit to mail are matter-of-fact time-and-place instructions for when we meet. If our emails ever do get leaked, people will assume we're spies.

And yet, the current paranoia spreading around manhood feels like a small price to pay. For as headline-grabbing the Weinstein story has been, the Ansari story feels just as instructive: both nonchalantly placed their desire above distress.

There will, of course, be oversteps in the Me Too movement, times when the tide rises up and leaves a high watermark before the sea finally settles. But by God, shouldn't there be?

We can hardly complain. All this time, the beach was ours. GQ

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GQ Details

EDITED BY **Charlie Burton**

Maya Jama p.46 Trainers step lively p.56 God Of War fights back p.63 Your next drone p.64

GoldLink (aka D'Anthony Carlos) made his name on Soundcloud

THE RISING STAR

Photograph **Thuan Tran/Coach**

GoldLink still puts on two pairs of socks every morning, just as he did growing up broke in Washington, DC. With a Grammy nomination, sold-out tours in America and Europe and a critically acclaimed debut album, all in the last year, having to "double sock" to make ill-fitting shoes wearable should be a distant memory. But for the 24-year-old rapper (real name: D'Anthony Carlos), hometown habits die hard. His record, *At What Cost*, is an ode to his city. "I want people to understand me, that this is how I grew up," says Carlos. "That turned into me glorifying [the city] from my perspective."

Carlos hasn't always been so willing to share; the Soundcloud upstart is notoriously elusive. As early as 2013, his genre-bending blend of electronica, rap, R&B and house – a sound he calls "future bounce" – was gathering major attention. Producer Rick Rubin became his mentor, and yet Carlos stayed anonymous. Even now, he expresses disdain for exposure. "I'm not in the business of always giving too much," he says. "I've found the balance of when to give and when not to." When he does give, though, he goes full throttle. In his acclaimed live shows, Carlos possesses the stage in a way that you have to witness to appreciate. "I don't belong to one person, but yet I belong to everyone." **Kathleen Johnston**

At What Cost is out now. For more exclusive content, visit Vero. vero.co

THE RISING STAR

Maya Jama

She may not be a singer, but Maya Jama is arguably the coolest woman on the British music scene right now. From red carpets to radio, the 23-year-old is, well, everywhere. Last year, MTV regular Jama made history as the youngest person to host the Mobos, presented her first primetime TV show and DJ'd for global brands. She's also a major source of #couplegoals, having been in a relationship with rapper Stormzy for three years. But it's her latest gig as a Radio 1 host that's nailed Jama's position as model millennial. Yet her status hasn't come easy. The Bristolian was working three jobs when she moved to London at 16. Around that time, her then-boyfriend was shot dead. Prior to that, Jama would spend weekends visiting her father in jail before deciding, aged 12, to cut ties, a decision that would later feature in her 2017 documentary *When Dad Kills: Murderer In The Family*. "When you go through bad things that are meant to crush you, you realise you have no control over them," she says. "It's how you deal with them that defines you." KJ

Visit GQ's Vero channel for more exclusive content. vero.co

Photograph by **Bella Howard**
Styling by **Jeanie Annan-Lewin**

Top by **Loewe**, £790. loewe.com. Shorts by **American Vintage**, £85. uk.americanvintage-store.com. Bracelet, £225. Ring, £103. Both by **Miansai**. miansai.com. Necklace by **Delfina Delettrez**, £1,800. delfinadelettrez.com

Hair and make-up **Letitia Sophia using Maybelline and GHD**

By **Alex Wickham**

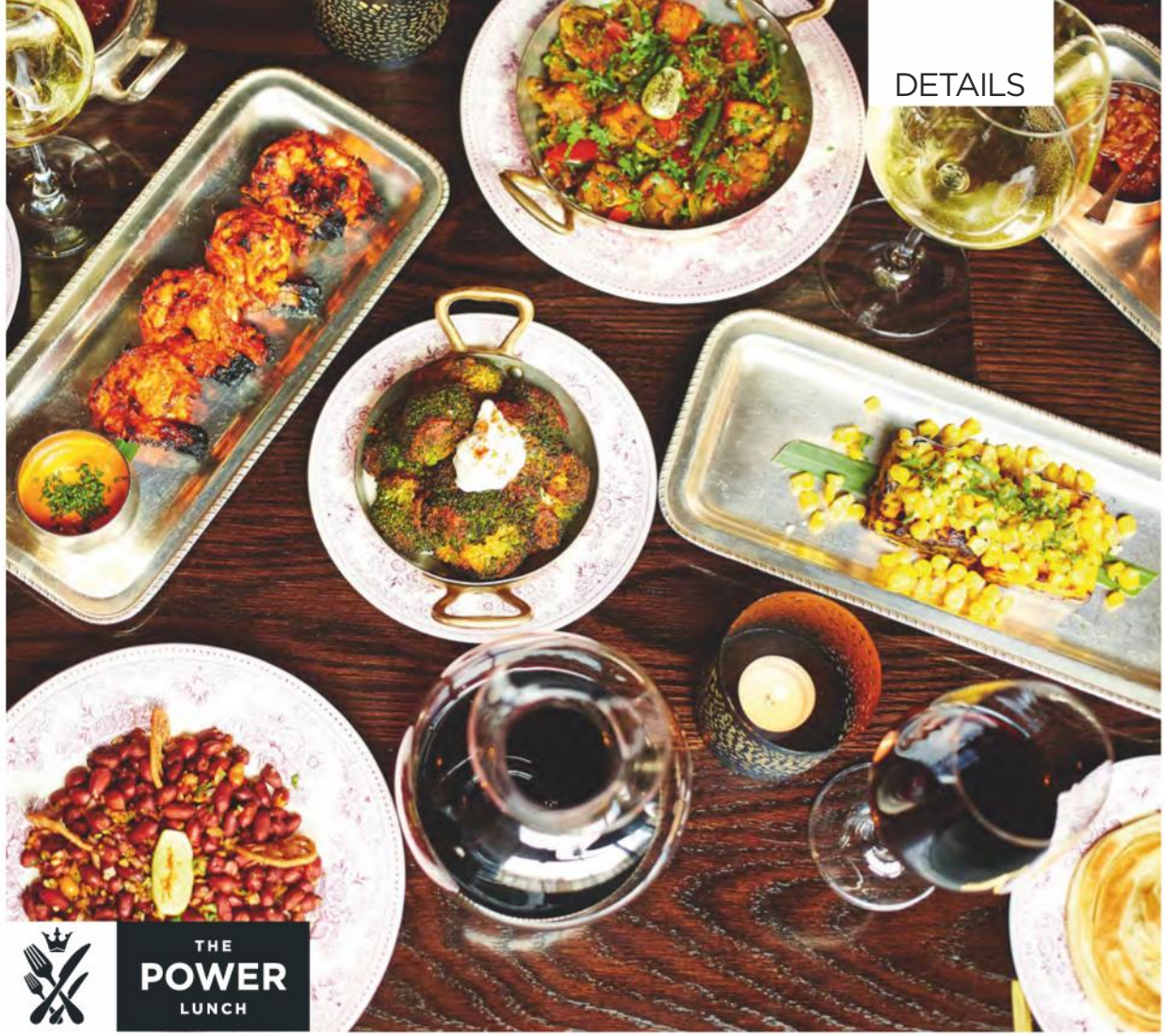
THE RUMOUR MILL

The support of the 2015 intake of Tory MPs is crucial for anyone wishing to become Theresa May's successor. A fact not lost on David Davis' close ally Andrew Mitchell, who has been tapping up parliament's relative newbies, telling them how talented they are and how the only person who can help their careers is Davis. Subtle.

The ambitious Jeremy Hunt has been telling anyone who'll listen that he is a Brexit convert and would now vote to leave the EU. Quite surprising, since in the days after 23 June he was calling for a second referendum to overturn the result. If Hunt does run for leader, he'll be hoping Tory members don't remember he also wanted free movement to continue in Brexit Britain...

Emily Thornberry is the favourite to be the next Labour leader, and she isn't shy about her own manoeuvres. Thornberry has been cosying up to Fleet Street's finest, holding 25 meetings with newspaper proprietors, editors and executives in 12 months. That's more than double the media meetings held by Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell and Diane Abbott combined.

When an email marked "urgent" pinged into Tory MPs' inboxes warning that Liam Fox was refusing to pay a bill, it looked for a moment like Brexit could be in peril. Fortunately, it was just Philip Davies rather publicly ordering Fox to pay up the £65 he owed for a dinner. Who says Brexiteers don't meet their financial obligations?



THE POWER LUNCH

Gymkhana

We recently asked *GQ*'s editorial staff a simple question: which of *GQ*'s local "it" restaurants are you still excited to lunch at? One name kept coming up: Gymkhana. Karam Sethi's Indian hotspot, styled as a Raj-era gentlemen's club – blood-dark mahogany, marble tabletops, wooden ceiling fans – opened to tremendous fanfare in 2014. It was quickly awarded a Michelin star and named, in one list, the finest restaurant in Britain. For it to remain so popular is quite the accolade in the fickle world of fine dining, but it's not surprising. The cooking is upscale without sacrificing punch and intrigue. Whether you opt for the familiar (saag paneer, chicken butter masala) or the adventurous (wild muntjac biryani, kid goat methi keema with brains), the flavours are detailed and as beguiling as the room. We'll fight you for our table. **CB**

42 Albemarle Street, London W1. 020 3011 5900. gymkhanalondon.com **The power table is No8**

+The Insta classics

Happy-snap your Instagram feed by following the 'grammers behind three posts we hit 'like' on this month

@tank.sinatra

@friendofbae

@boywithnojob

The needy nonconformist

For all his try-hard tastes, this whiny wannabe is only marketing one thing: himself

Story by **Jonathan Heaf** Illustration by **Sam Gilbey**

Everyone has a friend like the needy nonconformist. Or, rather, he's probably not your friend; not someone you'd proudly call your friend in a room full of your actual friends anyway. More like a reluctant acquaintance. Or a work associate. He's a professional, all right (note: "a" professional, not professional). In fact, he's probably very successful (financially) in his chosen field, which is... well, heaven knows.

In his late thirties/early forties, the NNC operates in that murky zone in all creative fields between art and commerce. He's a photographer's agent maybe, or a deputy art director working for a global fashion brand. His job is to hardboil everyone else's ideas, everyone else's genuine talent and turn it into an emoji he can put on a piece of "merch" for their pop-up store. Or a meme used to promote his "paid-for" posts on social media.

Essentially, he's in marketing, although everyone knows all that means is he's a failed ad exec with terrible taste in music/clothing/

HOW TO SPOT

tattoos/mode of personal transport/diet (he's "vegan – ish")/language (he once described a Basquiat painting as "pre-work"/Netflix (*Gilmore Girls*)/phone (he has a "burner", natch)/hair product/search engine. He owns a French bulldog called Napalm.

The needy bit about our nonconformist is his desperate desire to be cool. Boy, does he still want you to believe he's got it. And it's highly debatable if he ever had "it" in the first place. This clawing, whining anxiety over his status manifests itself through visual markers peppered throughout his personal style.

Music, for example. Now, despite seeing Marilyn Manson in 2003 as part of the Grotesk Burlesk tour (the experience traumatised him so much he can't even look at mascara without breaking out in a rash) and also somehow finding himself watching The Strokes prior to their first album release in 2001 (an ex-girlfriend took him, though he thought Julian Casablancas was a "poof" for wearing a pink satin tie on stage), our NNC in 2018 has no perceptible musical taste. He simply likes whatever it is cool to like – "Man, I *loooove* Kendrick" – and whatever will make him look rebellious. This year, he's contemplating getting into deep techno, despite once thinking Berghain was a type of German cheese.

Clothing-wise, he just throws money at the problem. And it is a problem. All that concerns NNC is getting the right gear, never mind what he actually looks like. He's in head-to-toe Hypebeast #grailfinds: whether a pair of Balenciaga Triple S trainers, a Vetements oversized hoodie or a camo field jacket from A Bathing Ape. Nothing is too expensive if it will help others believe he's still at the cutting edge, which, if you're lucky, you can help push him off if he ever gets too close. Which he won't. Ever.

Clothing-wise, he throws money at the problem. And it is a problem

GQ BAND O-MATIC

Do something different this month, tune in to these new sounds...

Into: Hot Chip?
Try: Django Django
Smart art rock that you can dance to. If John Hughes was still alive and making movies, this London four-piece would be on the soundtrack.
Marble Skies is out now.

Into: George Harrison?
Try: Jonathan Wilson
With a little help from friends Father John Misty and Lana Del Rey, the LA singer-songwriter-producer releases the year's first great break-up record.
Rare Birds is out now.

Into: Joy Division?
Try: Moaning
Debut album from an LA post-punk three-piece who prove you don't have to wear too much make-up to make a great goth record.
Moaning is out now.

Into: LCD Soundsystem?
Try: Hookworms
The Leeds-based collective who, having previously made a ferocious noise as psych rockers, now reinvent themselves as loved-up ravers with razor-sharp lyrics about life and death.
Kevin Perry
Microshift is out now.

The inspiration for Fiftysix had one of VC's first self-winding movements

Edited by **Bill Prince** Photograph by **Omer Knaz**

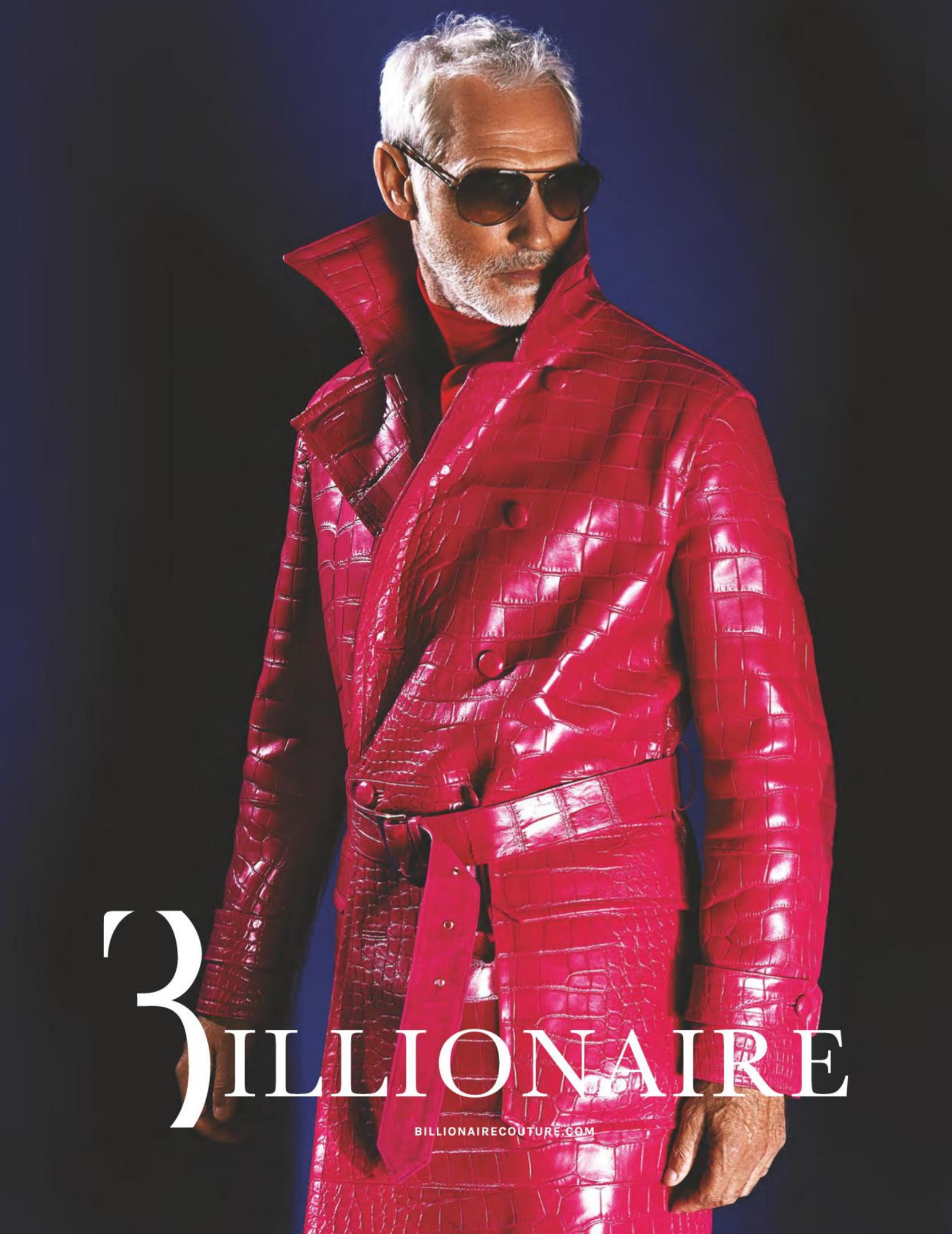
THE WATCH PAGE

Dialled back

Vacheron Constantin's new neo-vintage timepiece moves forward by referencing its past

Geneva's oldest watch brand in continuous production (that's 263 years and counting) has trodden lightly on its own lineage to create its latest collection. Named Fiftysix for a midcentury reference (it's one of Vacheron Constantin's first to be equipped with a self-winding movement), there are three options to choose from, the entry point being this handsome three-hander with date (there are also day-date with power reserve and a full calendar with moon-phase versions). All benefit from the same sweeping 40mm case design (cannily shielding the crown and integrating the lugs, as per the "original"), vintage-style "box" crystal and a "sector"-type dial with either pink- or white-gold numerals and markers depending on the case material – a rather unusual choice (for VC) between stainless steel and pink gold. **BP**

Vacheron Constantin Fiftysix Self-Winding, from £10,500. vacheron-constantin.com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Roger Frampton

Even with his feet in the air, the personal trainer and fitness guru keeps his style grounded

Portrait by **Leigh Keily**

MY STYLE

Trainers

"Smart sneakers mean I can go to meetings in the day and work out in the evening without changing."
By Paul Smith, £140. paulsmith.com

Wish list

Shorts

"I love the cut of Orlebar Brown shorts. No other label makes them as fitted or as stylish. I like the little band on the side because you can tighten them."
£145. orlebarbrown.com

Jumper

"This jumper is cosy and great to handstand in. I spend a lot of time upside down so I need material that won't fall but isn't super tight either."
By PS By Paul Smith, £195. paulsmith.com

Wish list

Shoes

"I've always wanted a pair of monk-straps. It doesn't matter whether you wear high street if you accessorise well. A great pair of shoes can make your whole outfit look expensive."
By Tom Ford, £1,365. tomford.com

Wish list

Watch

"A Rolex never goes out of date. Everybody should gift themselves one. It's not a status symbol, it shows you are successful and that you have invested in yourself."
£28,659. rolex.com

Trousers

"Having spent years fashion modelling, I prefer fitted trousers. They create a nice silhouette and add a bit of height. Plus, the fitted look helps pull everything in."
By Marks & Spencer, £25. marksandspencer.com

Wish list

Dog leash

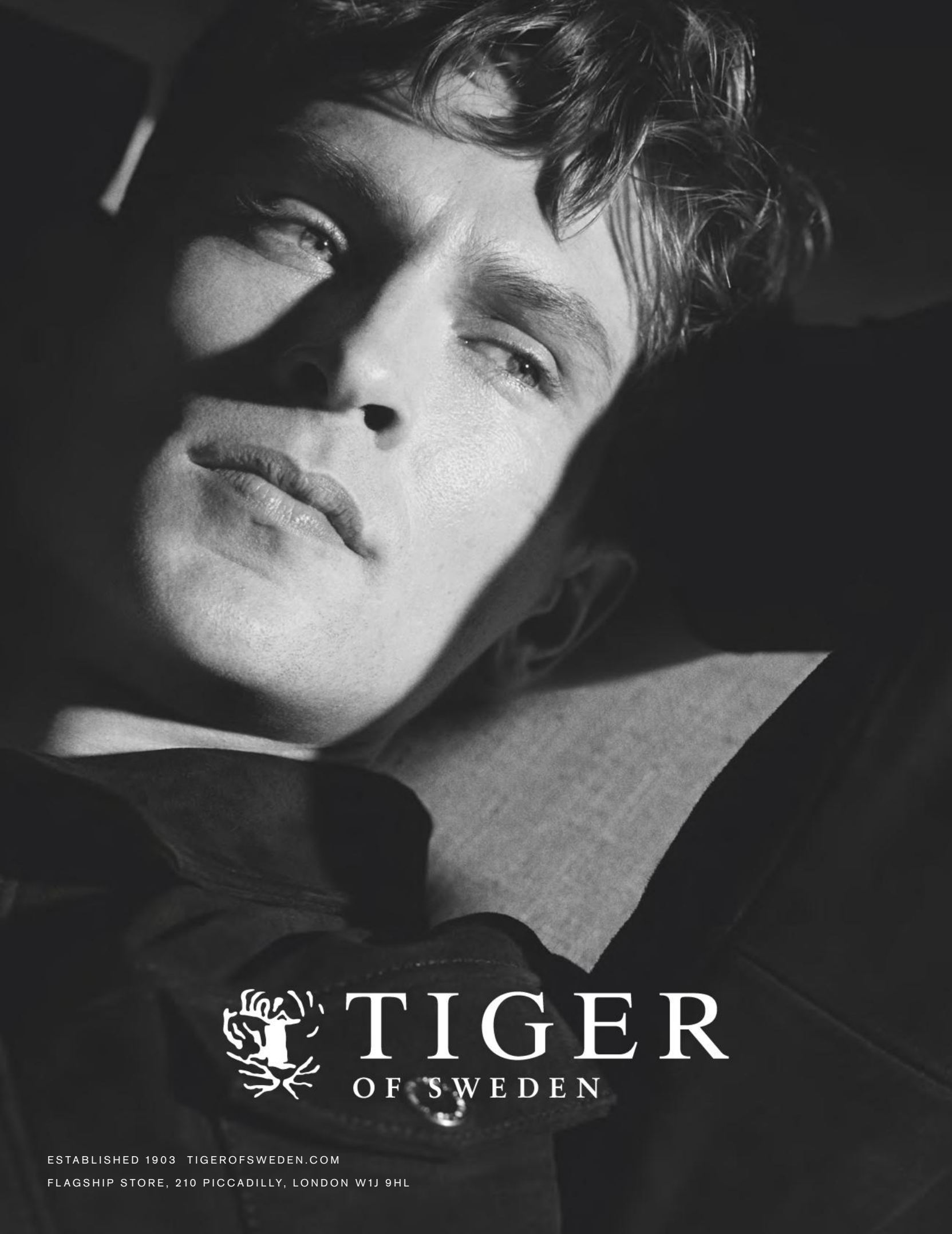
"My cavapoo, Alan, comes with me everywhere – he's like my luggage. Louis Vuitton is renowned for its luggage, so it is the clear choice."
£240. uk.louisvuitton.com

Wish list

Bag

"I live in the country so I don't need a weekend bag. I'd use this to carry my portfolio, laptop and iPad to meetings."
By Tom Ford, £2,376. tomford.com

Text **Eleanor Halls** Grooming **Michael Gray**



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Boutique, rebooted

Home of design destination Aria's second showroom – and recently restored by architect Amin Taha – 168 Upper Street is North London's new aesthetes' paradise

Edited by **Aaron Callow**

1 Gabbia coat stand by **Ligne Roset**, £306. Jumper by **John Smedley**, £155. **2** Ploum sofa by **Ligne Roset**, £2,656. **3** Peak bonbonniere by **Stelton**, £55. **4** Guatavita serving plate by **Da Terra**, £45. **5** Vilna dining table by **Ligne Roset**, £2,040. **6** Stool by Indonesian artisans, £169. **7** Alburni occasional table by **Ligne Roset**, £530. **8** Vintage rug, £895. All at Aria. ariashop.co.uk

+ GQ's pick of Aria's leading lights (and chairs, and tables...)

Origami dining table by **Innermost**, £721.

Foxi armchair by **Sits**, £516.

IC T1 table light by **Flos**, £328.

Togo sofa by **Ligne Roset**, £1,881. All at Aria. ariashop.co.uk

Build a Woah! Record Library

#14 Heart Food

By **Judee Sill** (Asylum, 1973)

The vinyl revival remains in rude health. **Dylan Jones** selects an overlooked classic to hunt out next time you're flicking through the crates...

She called her music "country-cult-baroque", which, given she made it, she is perfectly entitled to. She had a pure prairie-style folk voice, a fondness for Bach-like melodies and winsome librarian looks that could have easily cast her as a Joni Mitchell wannabe. Judee Sill was never going to be a Joni Mitchell wannabe.

The first artist to release an album on David Geffen's Asylum, in 1971, she wrote "Lady-O" for The Turtles, "Jesus Was A Crossmaker" for The Hollies and, rather stupidly, died in 1979 from a drug overdose. "I did heroin with gusto to escape my torment and misery," she told *Rolling Stone* in 1972. "But then I figured if I could maintain that kind of habit that long, the willpower I'd need to kick it would be a cinch." She was wrong. A substance abuser from an early age – both her parents and stepfather were heavy drinkers – she resorted to crime in her teenage years and, after developing a taste for armed robbery (she carried a .38 and held up gas stations), spent nine months in reform school in Ventura, California. On release, she got even more heavily into drugs and, eventually, prostitution. "As a hooker, my heart wasn't in it... all I really cared about was getting that needle in my vein, squeezing off."

Not that you'd immediately know this from her records. While her lyrics could only have been written in the early Seventies (where laborious introspection was a default option for any fledgling singer-songwriter), her melodies and arrangements sound like sophisticated alternatives to the sort of material being developed by Richard Carpenter.

Her best song, "The Kiss", from her second album, *Heart Food*, is worthy of mid-period Brian Wilson and dovetails perfectly with The Beach Boys' *Surf's Up*.

+Augment your life

Three substitutions to make this month

Switch off
Every other Marvel show

Switch on
Jessica Jones series two

The big-screen Marvel superhero movies: brilliant, fun, exciting and often to be found in 3-D. The small-screen Netflix Marvel sorta-superhero TV shows: boring, one-note, endless, remarkably similar and did we say boring? That is, apart from *Jessica Jones*, starring Krysten Ritter as a hard-drinking super-strong gal with issues. *Jessica Jones is on Netflix 8 March*

Ditch
Victoria's Nova Food

Eat at
The City's Bloomberg Arcade

Bloomberg Arcade – the new Lord Foster-designed European HQ of the news organisation – has become a foodie mecca, with ten independent restaurants, curated by Bloomberg's chief food critic, clustering around its ground floor. Many are already open, but they've saved the best for last: Michelin-starred A Wong is set to open a second London restaurant there this spring. *Bloomberg Arcade, 3 Queen Victoria Street, London EC2*

Stop fearing
Sebastian Vettel

Worry about
Max Verstappen

When Lewis Hamilton airs his views on F1 racers, it's fair to say he knows of what he speaks. Hamilton overcame Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel to win last year's F1 Drivers World Championship, but just as notable was the fact 20-year-old Belgian-Dutch wunderkind Max Verstappen beat him twice in the final few races. "He can be a title contender," said Hamilton of Verstappen. *The new F1 season starts on 26 March.* **SM**

BRING YOUR 'A' GAME

No.39

Hand-shake your way to success

When Joe Navarro was a special agent at the FBI, he was a founding member of its Behavioural Analysis Program. Now, he consults on nonverbal comms. Here's how to up your shake game...

1 Press the flesh

Sweaty palms? "The worst thing you can do is drag your hands down your trousers." Instead, adjust your jacket – tug it near the lower button or the lapels – as a way to covertly dry them.

2 The ideal handshake

Make eye contact, smile and swing your arm in confidently with the fingers angled downwards. Engulf your shaker's hand warmly, imitating their energy level.

3 Two to avoid

Don't do the politician-style two-handed shake – to show more affection, grasp their upper arm with your other hand. Also, avoid touching their wrist, as this is an erogenous zone.

4 How to get out of a bad one

If your shaker is not letting you go, respond by briefly squeezing their forearm. "That usually is a good distraction to end the handshaking."

5 But if you need to show them who's boss...

Don't be tempted to squeeze, pull or twist their hand. "I prefer to establish dominance with my body posture and my face. When it's time to terminate the shake, you'll know it."

Illustrations **Dave Hopkins** Photograph **Getty Images**

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THE
TRAINERS
EDIT

Behooving...

Spring into action as the weather gets warmer with a pair of high-fashion sneakers in truly cosmic shades. The bouncier your soles, the louder your hues and the punchier your swagger, the better.

Story by **Teo van den Broeke**
Photographs by **Benjamin Savignac**

Trainers by **Prada**, £555. prada.com

Trainers by **Dior Homme**, £750. dior.com

THE
ENTREPRENEUR

Ben Silbermann

Here, the CEO and co-founder of Pinterest, the £8.6 billion visual discovery app that 'pins' a trillion lifestyle recommendations a year, reveals what he has learnt...

Yale University

Don't over-research

"If you can build the product almost as quickly as you can research it, then you should just build the product. It's better to get it into somebody's hands."

The 290,000 sq metre Googleplex campus near San Jose

Sell and anti-sell

"We'd say to investors, 'This is what Pinterest could be, but these are the risks.' People that opt in knowing the risks are the partners you want."

Silbermann at his San Francisco base

Based San Francisco
Age 35

EDUCATION

2005
Yale University,
BA Political Science

CAREER IN BRIEF

2002
Founded Sensory Media,
New Haven, Connecticut

2003
Consultant at Corporate
Executive Board, Washington DC

2006
Product specialist at Google,
California

2009
Co-founded Pinterest,
San Francisco

June 2017
Pinterest raises a further
£105 million, valuing the
company at £8.6 billion

September 2017
Pinterest crosses 200m
monthly active users globally

Don't separate work and play

"You need to integrate your work and personal life. I don't think it's practical any more for people to have this really clean split. You need to develop patterns that work for your family as well as your job. You don't want to be half on, half off all the time. It's not a good way to live your life."

Listen and learn

"I learnt to listen very carefully to clients when I was consulting, which meant that at Pinterest our customer service was highly personal. I even gave my email and mobile number to customers."

Pinterest HQ, San Francisco

It's not as risky as you think

"When you're early in your career you overestimate how risky quitting your job is. Everything always seems much riskier looking forwards than it does looking backwards."

Pinterest has more than 200 million monthly users

Think laterally

"It was difficult to raise funds for Pinterest because of the financial crisis. So I entered a college business plan contest and the prize was meeting with venture capitalists First Market Capital in New York, which gave us half our money."

Text **Eleanor Halls** Photograph **Alamy**

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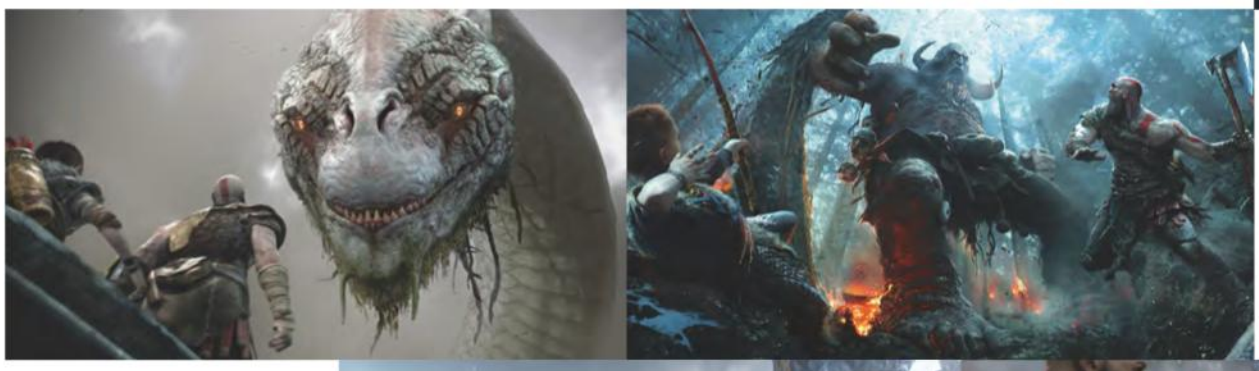

In God Of War, Kratos heads north to new mythologies with his son, Atreus

THE VIDEO GAME

God Of War, son of peace?

They say the classics never go out of fashion. But with the father of Olympic carnage now nurturing a more thoughtful side, are game designers tempering their lust for one-note ultra-violence?

Summer 1987 and Yoshihito Kakihara, eccentric founder of diminutive Japanese games company Tecmo, called his employees into his office. Reviews of the studio's most recent game, *Rygar*, were in and they weren't good. An exasperated Kakihara ordered his staff to put on their coats and pay a visit to the headquarters of every major Japanese video game retailer. On arrival, they were instructed to fall to their knees and issue an apology and an assurance that their next game would be much better.

This sort of extravagant gesture, while humiliating, was also fitting: *Rygar* was a game based in the world of Greek myth, home of the self-flagellating odyssey. In the decades that followed, the classics have continued to provide developers inspiration. The appeal is obvious. Games are often uncomplicated power fantasies featuring immortal protagonists, predestined for triumph. Then there's the endless supply of monsters – the Cyclops, Medusa, the Chimera, the Hydra – each cast in enough games by now to retire on the royalties.

No series has embraced Greek myth as closely as *God Of War*. Its hero, Kratos, has been seen tearing the spines from his foes, bathing in their blood, before retreating to relax (ahem) with his inexplicably ever-present harem. The game, like *The Iliad*, is not big on subtlety. But this will change with a forthcoming reimagining of the series, which shifts the backdrop from Greek to Norse mythology. In the barren cold, an older Kratos must protect his son and master his rage. As they journey, Kratos' son, Atreus, learns about his father's dark past and must decide whether to follow the same bloody path or forge his own. The move took place, in part, to provide fresh material for creatively wearied designers. It also reflects a deeper change in the medium, a shift from power fantasy to something more nuanced. According to the game's creative director, the Greek gods and monsters had to be left behind to make room for Kratos to become a more complex character. For now, at least, Greek myth may have served its purpose in video games. **Simon Parkin**

God Of War, like The Iliad, is not too big on subtlety

God Of War is out on 20 April.

THE BOOK TO READ

Tony Parsons **Girl On fire** Out on 8 March (£12.99, Penguin)

For years, Tony Parsons wrote novels about the modern male experience – bestsellers such as *Man And Boy* and *One For My Baby*. Then, in 2014, he published his first crime novel – and won considerable plaudits. Now, his DC Max Wolfe series is entering its fifth instalment with *Girl On Fire*, a tale of terrorism, technology and revenge.

You often describe the seeds of your novels as "hunches". What was the hunch with *Girl On Fire*?
The hunch was a flight I was on, coming in to land, that had a near miss with a drone. It seemed to me if some member of a nihilistic death cult wanted to cause maximum damage to a few thousand people, a drone – and Amazon will send a great one to your door tomorrow for less than a grand – might be a place to start. The book is about how that attack impacts on the innocent and the guilty and a teenage girl caught in the middle.

The Max Wolfe books always speak to current affairs. Were there any themes that you were thinking of exploring in the novel that you decided to leave out?
The only thing I left out was that I wrote a book about the impact of a terrorist atrocity without once using the words "Islam" or "Muslim". Mario Puzo wrote *The Godfather* – the best ever book about the Mafia – without ever using the word "Mafia". He is a bit of a role model.

What was the most challenging thing about pivoting to crime fiction?
The career pivot was not so much the challenge as embarking on a series and trying to keep the quality up. I knew I could write a cracking thriller, but writing a series in six years has been hard. I wrote the first book, *The Murder Bag*, without a contract, cashed in my life savings and took two years off to write it – a big roll of the dice. And it all went well: sold the book in 24 hours; it was a *Sunday Times* No1. But then you have to do it again and again and again. **CB**

Photograph **Getty Images**

THE LAB TEST

Mavic Pro by DJI

£1,248 (with headset). store.dji.com

Plenty of drones bill themselves as portable, but you'd hardly want to lug them around all day. The Mavic Pro is an exception. Its arms and propellers fold away, allowing it to collapse down to the size of a typical Bluetooth speaker, but that doesn't mean it scrimps on features. The drone comes with a 4K/12MP camera, "Active Track" mode to follow you around autonomously, a 30-minute flight time and collision detection.

Get your rotor running...

As photographers, athletes and the world beyond geeksville have embraced drone technology, the kit has got smarter. The latest have VR-style headsets to put you just right there in the cockpit

Photograph by **Michael Hedge**
Set design by **Kerry Hughes**

Bebop 2 Power FPV
by Parrot

£629.99. parrot.com

The Parrot makes aerial film-making a cinch. Its custom-made lens counters image distortion and three-axis stabilisation keeps things sharp by reducing vibration in the air. Pre-programmed shots, such as a 360-degree panorama and a variety of "travelling camera motions", allow you to film yourself in a way once reserved for those with access to a helicopter and expertise. Capture is at 1080p HD rather than 4K, but then it's half the price of the DJI.

Challenger
by ProFlight

£54.97 (with headset and obstacles). dronesdirect.co.uk

While drones have developed a multitude of serious applications, there's no denying that they're also, to put it simply, fun. The ProFlight Challenger is built for racing. Strap on the headset and it's like you're in a George Lucas Podracer. The vehicle is robust, but if you break it or lose it in a tree, fear not – a replacement is a ridiculously reasonable £29.97.

West assured

The opening of a new Soho House in White City has given the area mojo to rival Shoreditch

White City House takes up residence in the former home of the BBC, Television Centre, this month

THE LONDON SCENE

White City House

Television Centre, 101 Wood Lane, W12. whitecityhouse.com

In brief: With three floors of Sixties-themed club space, 45 rooms, two cinemas, a 2,300 sq metre gym, two restaurants, cocktail bars and a rooftop pool, Soho House's latest outlet will open in the BBC's Grade-II listed former HQ in April.

Bonus points: The club's Electric Cinema is the group's biggest yet. Unlike its Soho and Shoreditch rivals, it will show multiple features each week.

Done deal: Not only does White City House have a rooftop pool, it has an indoor one too.

Kricket

Television Centre, 101 Wood Lane, W12. kricket.co.uk

In brief: First opened in Soho last year, Kricket's modern Indian fare – small plates inspired by Mumbai served on countertops – proved so popular that queues went around the block, and a second site, triple the size, was in order.

Bonus points: Unlike Soho's branch, White City Kricket comes with a separate cocktail bar and an outdoor terrace.

Done deal: You won't find better fried chicken anywhere in this part of town than Kricket's Keralan, served with curry leaf mayonnaise.

Huckletree West

191 Wood Lane, W12. huckletree.com

In brief: This new outpost of the East London coworking space for entrepreneurs, Huckletree West features desks and private studios for up to 450 startup founders, with 40 per cent of the space dedicated to urban gardens and breakout spaces.

Bonus points: There's a podcasting booth for content creators – because podcasting is the new blogging – plus, a VR studio.

Done deal: Forget ping-pong tables and kegs of craft beer, Huckletree means business. Thus, the tech-free meditation yurt and a crèche for members to drop off their offspring.

Bluebird

Television Centre, 101 Wood Lane, W12. bluebird-restaurant.co.uk

In brief: The first sister site to Chelsea's infamous 20-year-old Bluebird Café, a hotspot for influencers and their pooches, Bluebird White City will have West London's it-crowd fighting for the best Instagram shot over superfood smoothies.

Bonus points: Spread over 450 sq metres, the café will also include a bar, deli and an outdoor terrace.

Done deal: Over the years, the Bluebird team has received countless offers to open more outposts. And yet – because of its historic location – White City Bluebird is the only one to get the green light.

Elephant West

74 Wood Lane, W12. elephant.art

In brief: Housed in a converted petrol station, designed by architects Liddicoat & Goldhill, Elephant West sells itself as a hub for the arts community.

Bonus points: The hub hosts live dance and music, installations from emerging artists, as well as talks, workshops and screenings.

Done deal: Covered in clashing primary colours arranged in geometric shapes, the petrol station is itself an art piece. Painted by artists Craig & Karl, this is their first major public work in London and, titled "Hereafter", hints at things to come. **EH**

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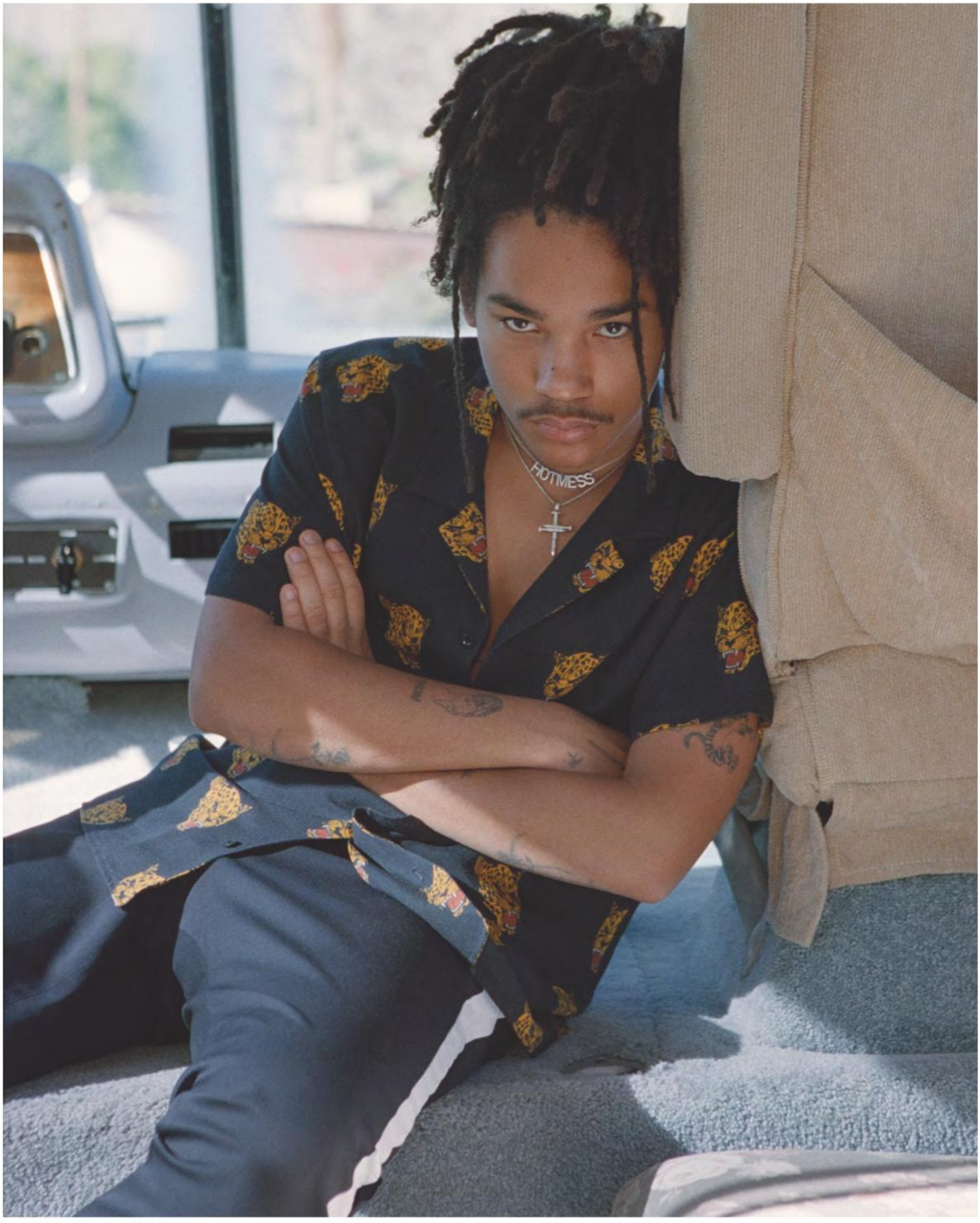
AUTOMATIC SWISS MADE



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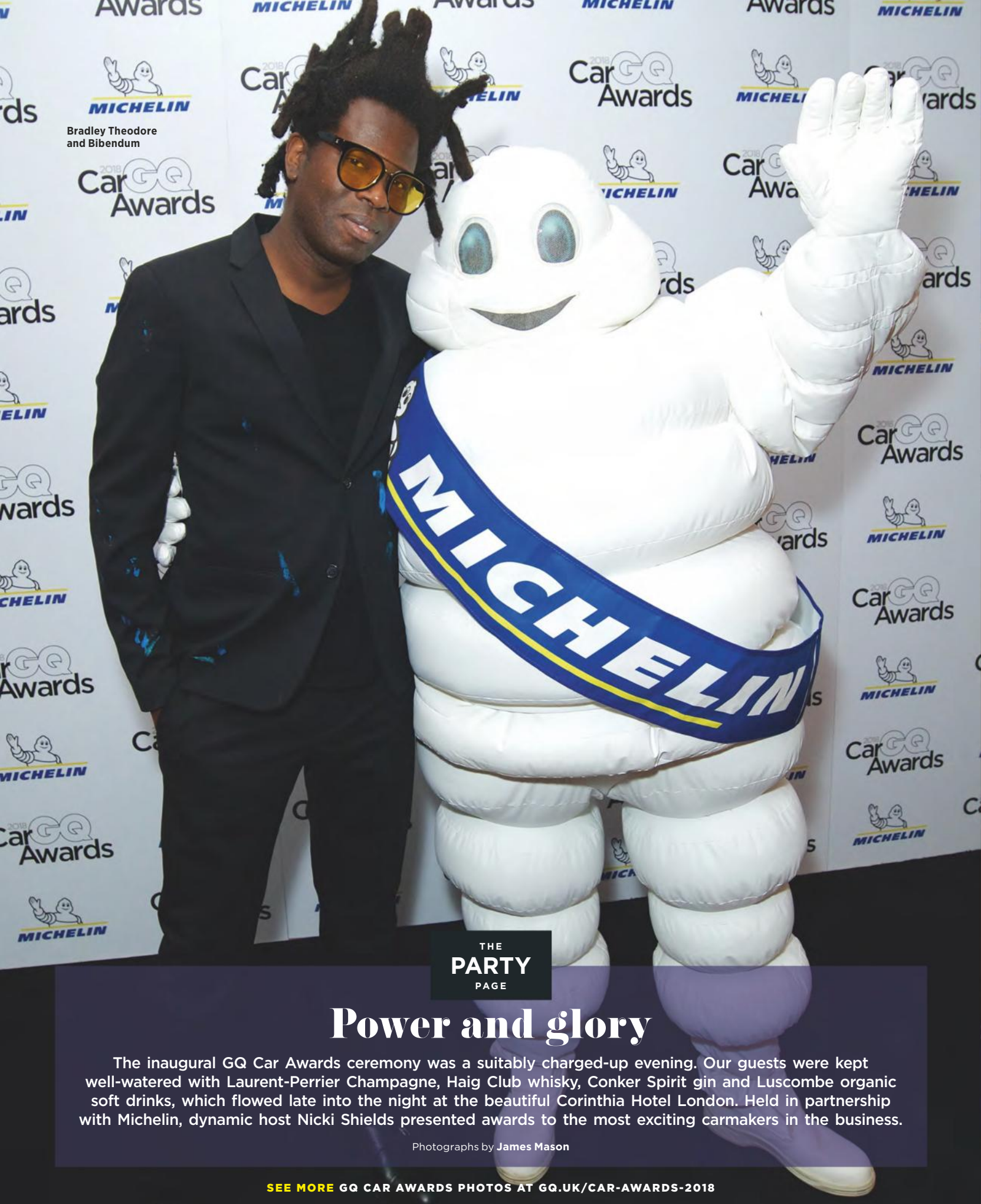


Bradley Theodore and Bibendum

THE PARTY PAGE

Power and glory

The inaugural GQ Car Awards ceremony was a suitably charged-up evening. Our guests were kept well-watered with Laurent-Perrier Champagne, Haig Club whisky, Conker Spirit gin and Luscombe organic soft drinks, which flowed late into the night at the beautiful Corinthia Hotel London. Held in partnership with Michelin, dynamic host Nicki Shields presented awards to the most exciting carmakers in the business.

Photographs by **James Mason**

SEE MORE GQ CAR AWARDS PHOTOS AT GQ.UK/CAR-AWARDS-2018

Corinthia Hotel London

Juan Pablo Montoya and Stephan Winkelmann

Nicki Shields, Bradley Theodore and the Michelin team

Ken McConomy and Jermaine Jenas

Vicki Butler-Henderson and Gerry McGovern

Paul Stroud, Adam Kay and Helen Barbour

Jake Humphrey and Tony Whitehorn

Alice Chater and Tom Holland

Fae Williams and Professor Green

Nicki Shields

Jason Fox

Andrew Doyle, Alex James, Nick Mason

Jenny Morgan, Jason Barlow and Amy Macdonald

+ Spied Maria Bamford at Leicester Square Theatre

This is Bamford's first ever stand-up gig in England and you should go. Don't listen to us, listen to Stephen Colbert, who called her his "favourite comedian on planet Earth". **From 21 to 23 March.**

GQ NAVIGATOR

Diarise these!

From books to breakout art shows via your next television binge, get ahead of the water-cooler chat and set your cultural compass to this month's pole stars...

+ For the nightstand

Russian Roulette
by Michael Isikoff and David Corn

Finished reading Michael Wolff's *Fire And Fury*? Pick up a copy of this new Trump-baiting volume on the American election. *Out on 20 March.*

Upstate
by James Wood

Those who know Wood as the *New Yorker*'s literary critic would do well to pick up his novels, too. *Upstate* is a funny, moving family drama. *Out now.*

Girl On Fire
by Tony Parsons

The latest Max Wolfe novel sees the detective dealing with a terrorist cell, a murderer – and an ex-wife. We interview the author on p63. *Out now.*

How To Fix The Future
by Andrew Keen

The "Christopher Hitchens of the internet" examines how society must recalibrate to protect human values in a data-driven world. *Out now.*

The Line Becomes A River
by Francisco Cantú

Cantú's memoir of his life on the US Border Patrol and the horrors he witnessed made a splash in America and now gets a UK release. *Out now.*

+ Listen to

Record
by Tracey Thorn

Electro-pop ruminations on family and feminism from one of British pop's warmest, wisest voices. A memoir you can dance to. *Out now.*

Boarding House Reach
by Jack White

The high priest of rock minimalism applies hip hop, synths, congas and spoken word to his busiest album yet. *Out on 23 March.*

American Utopia
by David Byrne

With collaborators including Brian Eno and Sampha, American music's wandering polymath distils big ideas into agile pop songs. *Out on 9 March.*

All Nerve
by The Breeders

The quartet whose brisk alt-rock influenced Courtney Barnett return after a decade with imperfections intact. **Dorian Lynskey** *Out now.*

+ Art

Picasso 1932
at Tate Modern

This museum's first ever solo Picasso exhibition focuses on one wildly creative year and includes work never seen in the UK. *Until 9 September.*

+ In cinemas

Tomb Raider

Sure, you've seen previous *Tomb Raider* films. Sure, you really, really wish you hadn't. But did they star Alicia Vikander? No, they did not. *Out on 16 March.*

The Square

This art world farce from Ruben Ostlund won the Cannes Palme d'Or, which is rare for a comedy, and will propel its Danish star Claes Bang to big things. *Out on 16 March.*

Unsane

Steven Soderbergh has come out of retirement (again!). This horror film, set in a psychiatric hospital, was shot on his iPhone. How Soderbergh is that? *Out on 23 March.*

Isle Of Dogs

Wes Anderson's latest, about a future Japan where dogs have been quarantined on an island, attracted voice work from Bryan Cranston, Bill Murray and Jeff Goldblum. *Out on 30 March.*

+ Watch it

Billions, series three

Billions is pure Wall Street porn. The new series is here at last, in all its maximalism, now with added John Malkovich. *On Sky Atlantic from 29 March.*

+ Don't miss

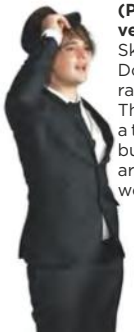
The Vaccines

One of London's best indie rock bands of recent years – and certainly one of the finest live acts going – hit the road again, touring new album *Combat Sports*. *From 3 April.*

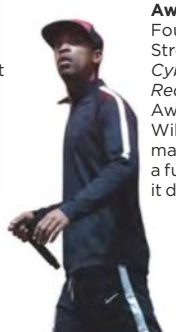
The Streets

The Streets forged a new voice in British rap. Ahead of the much-anticipated comeback tour (*from 19 April*), four rare Mike Skinner tracks you might not have heard...

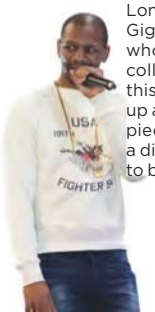
'Dreams' (2006)
Originally on the *Prangin' Out* EP, Skinner was so unhappy with his rapping he wanted to recall the record. Good he didn't, because he was wrong.



'Prangin' Out' (Pete Doherty version, 2006)
Skinner asked Doherty to guest rap on this track. That should be a terrible idea, but the results are strangely wonderful.



'Don't Hide Away' (2011)
Found on The Streets mixtape *Cyberspace And Reds*, "Don't Hide Away" featured Wiley, who alone made it worthy of a full release. Pity it didn't happen.



'Slow Songs' (2009)
London rapper Giggs, with whom Skinner collaborated on this track, offers up a beautiful piece that shows a different side to both men.

Photographs **Getty Images; Landmark Media**

Dune
LONDON

SPRING 2018 NOW AVAILABLE
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Watch the film at **dunelondon.com**

THE FIFTH BEATLE

Derek Taylor

He was the proto multihyphenate, serving as press officer, PA and confidante to John, Paul, George and Ringo while still finding time to master journalism, launch The Byrds, brand The Beach Boys and fulfil a ‘promise to save mankind’. GQ discovers the remarkable hinterland of the Fab Four’s true plus-one

STORY BY **John Savage** PHOTOGRAPH BY **Jane Brown**

Clockwise from back left: Head of Apple Films Denis O'Dell, Paul McCartney, head of Apple Electronics Alexis Mardas, Apple Corps lawyer Brian Lewis, head of Apple Records Ron Kass, Apple Corps manager Neil Aspinall, Derek Taylor and John Lennon at the Apple HQ in London, 1968

Photograph The Observer/topfoto.co.uk

'I'm obsessed with them. Isn't everybody?'

It happened quickly, Derek Taylor's transformation. You can see it in three pictures, captured over four years.

The earliest comes from 1964 when Taylor was The Beatles' press officer. Accompanying the band on their first full American tour, the one stoked by Beatlemania, he was more like a circus ringmaster than a PR. The snapshot, taken during a Dallas press conference on 18 September, shows him dressed immaculately and negotiating the ensuing chaos – police officers, reporters and fans all pushing and grabbing. This was a timeless look, though the tab-collar shirts, thin-lapel Italian suits, mid-length hair now epitomises the Sixties. Taylor – then a 32-year-old whose background included national service and an educational stint on Fleet Street as a reporter – is in the eye of the storm with his long-haired charges, a solid phalanx battling as best they could.

Born in Liverpool in 1932, Taylor had got to this position through Brian Epstein, whom he'd met and profiled in the summer of 1963 for the *Daily Express*. As he would later remember, Taylor's first impressions of The Beatles' manager rested on stylistic considerations. Thanks to his "very soft appearance, [Epstein] didn't look as if he did any exercise, but then a lot of people didn't then", Taylor said. "I certainly didn't do any and I was very thin. Cigarette smoking; nervy; very well-dressed; very good suit; lovely shirt. These were [details that] made people different: the buckled shoes, monogrammed shirt and good short haircut."

Epstein was also born in the Thirties and shared with the young journo many of the same ideas about how to live: the tailoring; the exquisite accessories; the expensive dinners in world-class restaurants such as Antoine's in New Orleans' French Quarter; the foulard scarves; the drinking; the smoking; the limousine with electric windows. This was the Rat Pack aesthetic, though in Beatles world it was often augmented with pills. The band's management lived what Taylor recalled as "the high life. For us provincials, that was seductive."

A mere year later, Taylor would have shed a skin. Leaving Epstein at the end of 1964, he moved to Los Angeles on a wing and a prayer, trusting that The Beatles' magic would stick. He lucked out, becoming the PR for an as yet unknown group called The Byrds. In lieu of immediate payment, he accepted a share in the band's earnings. When, within a few months, The Byrds had a worldwide hit with "Mr Tambourine Man", Taylor found himself back in the eye of the storm.

It's summer 1965: a formal situation, a press call perhaps. In the second picture of Taylor's transformative triptych, he is seen sitting between Gene Clark and Chris Hillman of The Byrds. Both have impossibly long hair for that period and are wearing a mix of So Cal surfer and British mod clothing. Taylor is wearing what look like Levi's, with an expensive suede jacket and a white shirt with a long "Slim Jim" tie. His hair is longer than before and slightly dishevelled. He looks as though he has just inhaled.

This was the year when the Fifties concept of the high life faded as an ideal. "Mr Tambourine Man" signalled the emergent drug culture's indoctrination into the mainstream. Taylor was at the centre of the new, marijuana-smoking Californian cool that – once it was taken up by The Beatles – changed the nature of pop culture and youth style forever. You've only to consider the longer hair, red-rimmed eyes and corduroy on display in the band's summer 1965 film, *Help!*, to acknowledge the shift.

'What I wanted went beyond journalistic curiosity. I was drawn to them'

Promoting The Byrds, The Beach Boys and Captain Beefheart, among others, Taylor found himself surrounded by the counterculture in 1966. He was behind the rebranding of Brian Wilson as a genius, writing in his regular *Disc And Music Echo* column, "Our Man In America", that October, ''[The] Beach Boys have a giant, monster, mountainous, world-topping, vast rolling ocean, mixed metaphor of a hit of hits in 'Good Vibrations', a record which, before the first copy is even in the stores, is named with total abandon, by disc jockeys, as a certain No1."

In November 1966, the LAPD found it necessary to crack down on curfew violations on the Sunset Strip, there were violent confrontations over several weekends. Taylor went down to the demonstration and was shocked at the violence: "I saw my first police 'flying wedge' on Sunset Boulevard; saw how professional [policemen] can always crush amateur freedomniks if they have a mind to; saw a sheriff's deputy spit on a woman; saw Peter Fonda in handcuffs; saw how bad things could be before they got worse, like now."

Taylor ran the press team for the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival, which The Beatles did not attend. Shortly after, he and his wife, Joan, went to a party at Epstein's Sussex country house, Kingsley Hill, where the couple took LSD in the company of John Lennon and George Harrison. "We saw wonderful things," Taylor recalled in the 1995 multimedia event *The Beatles Anthology*, "and we changed."

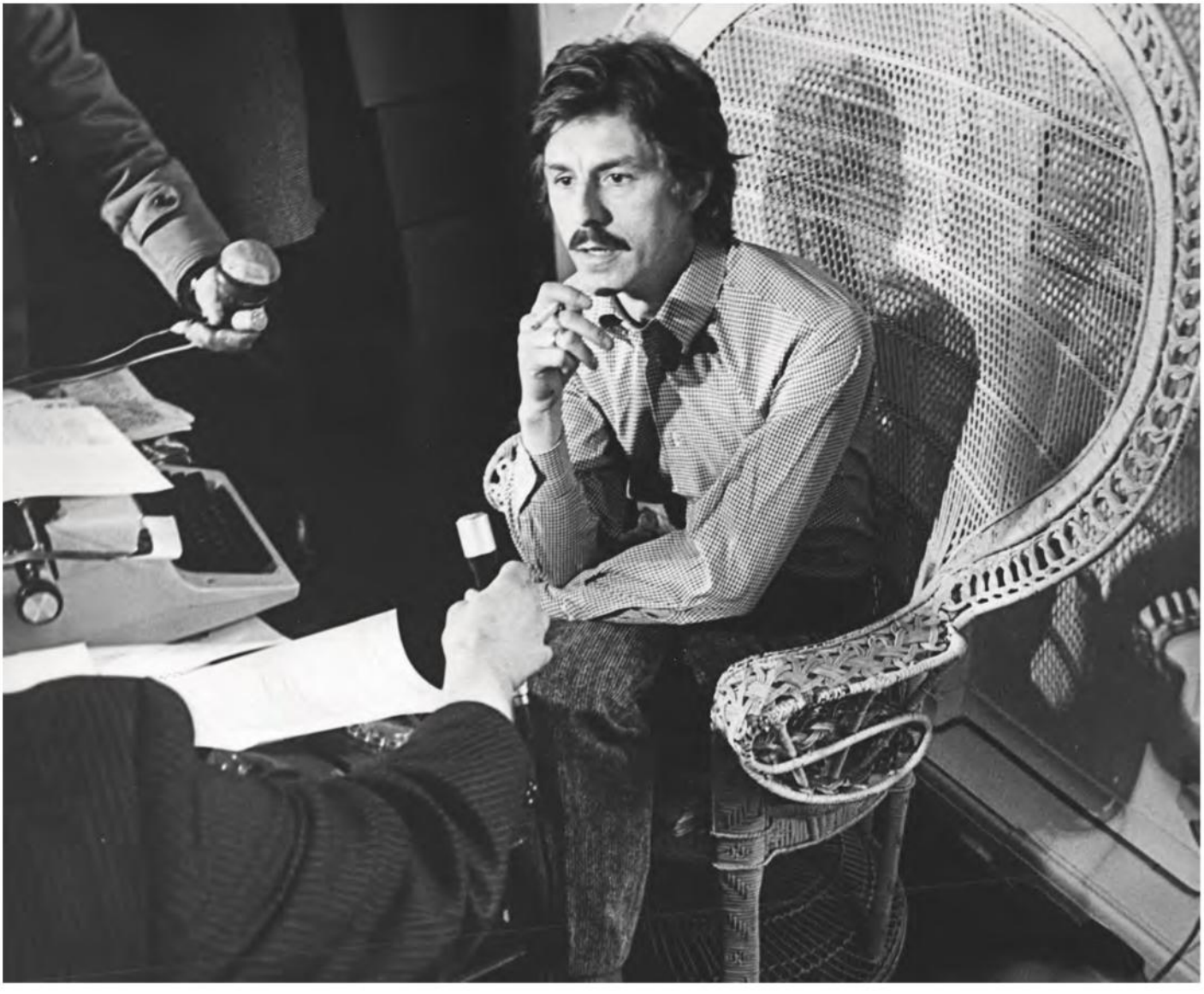
The third picture was taken in a Central London office. Five men stand in the background: they include Ron Kass, Paul McCartney and "Magic" Alex Mardas. Beatle intimate Neil Aspinall crouches down by the side of a large desk. In front, John Lennon swings round in a low armchair, touching a sitting Taylor with his left hand – a gesture both of tenderness and patronage. In the background is a large picture of The Beatles in their pop star uniform of suits and ties – an age and a world away.

Derek Taylor has transformed yet again and now looks a different person from the 1964 image. His hair is longer still, over his collar now, and he has a moustache. He is wearing just a shirt – no jacket – and slimline trousers. Lennon has changed too, with long hair parted in the centre, round "granny" glasses and a long-sleeved jersey. McCartney is wearing a jacket with a badge on the lapel and a jumper underneath – no shirt, no tie. It's late summer 1968 and Taylor has become the press officer at Apple.

When this photo was taken, he was 36. In an age when pop culture and the music industry was still almost exclusively youth-oriented, he was at the heart of a utopian organisation that sought to turn the rules of show business and corporate practice on its head. Taylor called it "the promise to save mankind" and he would become its most public face throughout its unravelling and the unravelling of The Beatles themselves. In the eye of the storm yet again, he would be both participant and observer. »

‘On LSD, we saw wonderful things and we changed’

Clockwise from top left: Taylor with Paul McCartney and Jane Asher, 1964; with Brian Epstein, 1964; by 1970, Taylor’s style had evolved by association with The Beatles



Photographs **Getty Images; Rex**

» "Never trust anyone over 30" was the dictum of the moment among young activists, yet here Taylor was, way over the age limit, propagandising the counterculture. As he wrote in his *Disc And Music Echo* column, "Beards and jeans and lace cloaks, waist-length hair, tranquillity and underground literature – these will be the visual symbols of the 'love in'. But beneath this lies a yearning for an end to America's right-wingery, grey-conformity and war-involvement. Thank you."

Taylor called the Sunset Strip Riots "the whole rotten issue of the old vs the young" and there was no doubt about which side he was on. He had crossed over twice: from Fleet Street into the heart of Sixties pop culture; from Fifties conservatism to hippie radicalism. Nevertheless, his training as a journalist and his talent as a writer made him an important and eloquent witness to these times, as evidenced by his books *As Time Goes By* and *Fifty Years Adrift* and in his interviews for and about The Beatles' *Anthology* documentary, albums and book.

Taylor was many things: an elegant writer who could flip into the crudest, earthiest language; a press officer who would go beyond the call of duty at the same time as he placed advertorial copy in the pop magazines of the time; a Beatle intimate taking remedial acid trips with John Lennon at the same time as he was an employee, if not a servant. He defined and extended what it was to be a PR at the same time as he retained a cool, journalistic eye. In the end, he preserved what was best about the high Sixties for future generations.

I met Derek Taylor in November 1996, when we shared a table at the Q Awards. That year, Tony Blair was in the ascendant; Jarvis Cocker mooned Michael Jackson at the Brit Awards; Britpop was at its peak and bad behaviour was definitely on the agenda. Taylor was back in the EMI fold after helping to promote the release of *The Beatles Anthology* and was in fine, rollicking form, dispensing insults, gossip and wisdom in a rapid, seamless stream. Even in his sixties, he was a master of the insider pop code.

Mick Jagger, Rod Stewart, Oasis and U2 were all in attendance. George Martin was presented with an award for the year's best compilation/reissue (for his work on the *Anthology* discs). The person handing him the award was Peter Blake, who used the floor to complain about the fact that he'd only received £200 for his work on the sleeve of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. When Blake started musing about whether he owned the copyright, Taylor stated, very loudly and precisely, "Shut up, you pompous c***." There was a sudden hush. Taylor owned the room.

As Time Goes By by Derek Taylor (Faber & Faber, £9.99) is reissued on 5 April

At that point, Anthony Wall and I were in the preliminary stages of planning an *Arena* documentary about Epstein. The first task in any such situation is to talk to the rights holders. We knew we had to approach Apple, so some months later, in June 1997, we went to talk to Taylor at his home in Suffolk. By that time, he was already very ill (he would die, from cancer, that September), but he generously gave us a wonderful interview, full of insight and detail about a man who – despite all The Beatles' books – was still an enigma, a fugitive and often maligned presence.

In spring 1963, Derek Taylor was 31 and a successful journalist at the *Daily Express*. "It was a very great, popular paper," he told us. "It was towards the end of [proprietor Lord] Beaverbrook and it was a good time to be there. I'd now got the theatre job and you could get in anywhere if you were on the *Daily Express*, anyone would see you. Journalists weren't nasty about people in the theatre in those days. The worst [that] anyone was called was a 'hell-raiser'. They were always nursing a hangover and picking at prawns and spearing a cockle and all of these horrible clichés."

'I thought the Liverpool sound was meaningless nonsense – but it was magnificent'

Taylor's conversion had come on 30 May 1963, when he reviewed The Beatles at the Manchester Odeon. "From Me To You" was at No1 and he smelled a story. "I'd always been very good on trends. I knew [that] this thing that was happening was *something* to write about." As he filed after the show, "The Liverpool sound came to Manchester last night and I thought it was magnificent… Indecipherable, meaningless nonsense, of course, but as beneficial and invigorating as a week on the bench of the pierhead overlooking the Mersey."

Behind the tabloidese, Taylor was bowled over. As he wrote 20 years later, "It has always seemed to me that the true essence of The Beatles is to be found distilled in 'From Me To You'. Boy-girl love song it may have been, but it was also a universal offering, spelled out with Liverpool directness and warmth and picked up by a whole generation including, from that night on, Joan and me. Though maybe at the 'wrong' end of that generation, we were nevertheless open thereafter to the possibilities of being truly young in heart."

In mid-June 1963, Taylor went to meet Brian Epstein. "So I did this interview with this amazing man, with his monogrammed shirt and his buckle shoes, and we got on awfully well considering what a front he had. He was awfully remote. He had this kind of sniffy front, but that didn't fool me, because I was from Liverpool. I didn't ask him anything very cheeky anyway. I just wanted to be nice about him and about The Beatles, because I was truly stunned by how marvellous they'd been at that concert."

Rapport thus established, Epstein began using Taylor as a sounding board and, in turn, Taylor became more and more fascinated by Epstein's charges. "I was drawn to knowing an enormous amount more about them. No newspaper man from Manchester on the *Daily Express* or the *Mail* should have been doing nearly as much as I was doing on The Beatles, in this depth, because you didn't have to cover them. You could just cover the mania and satisfy the public, but I wanted far more, beyond journalistic curiosity."

In early 1964, Epstein selected Taylor to ghostwrite his autobiography. "In the first lunch hour he said, 'I'm going to have to tell you now, did you know I was queer?' 'No,' I said, 'I didn't.' 'Well,' he said, 'I am, and if we're going to do this book I'm going to have to stop buggering about, saying I was with this girl, when I was with a boy. Does that make any difference?' 'No,' I said, 'it does not make any difference. It'll make it a lot easier, so you mustn't worry any more, difficult as it may be to convince you perhaps, but I won't ever let you down.'"

When the call came to become Epstein's personal assistant, Taylor jumped. For all its esteem, Fleet Street was driving him mad. Having something of a piratical nature himself, he appreciated Epstein's closeness with The Beatles. "This was what bound Brian and the boys together, they all did think big. Very high notions of themselves and very high expectations. He was prepared to sit it out with them, with all their cheek and impudence. In a way they had a lot in common, just the vernacular was different." Taylor »

‘The high life, for us provincials, was seductive’

Taylor (sixth from front) joins The Beatles on their arrival in Liverpool for the premiere of A Hard Day’s Night, 10 July 1964

Photograph **Alamy**

» was hooked. He wanted in and he got what he wanted, the position of The Beatles' press officer on their summer 1964 world tour and autumn American tour – the moment when Beatlemania was at its wildest. Living on a diet of brandy and a morning ritual of "two small yellow dexedrine tablets", Taylor finessed the madness as well as he could while remaining an acute observer. Press demand was so high that, in lieu of the four Beatles or Epstein, he would find himself fielding quotes from within the eye of the storm.

"I'm obsessed with them. Isn't everybody?" he told Al Aronowitz of the *Saturday Evening Post* that summer. "In Australia, for example, each time we'd arrived at an airport, it was as if De Gaulle had landed, or better yet, the Messiah. The routes were lined solid, cripples threw away their sticks, sick people rushed up to the car as if a touch from one of the boys would make them well again, old women stood watching with their grandchildren and as we'd pass by I could see the look on their faces. It was as if some saviour had arrived."

Taylor told a jealous Brian Wilson that The Beatles were always No1 for him

Taylor had caught the quasi-religious fervour that surrounded and still surrounds The Beatles. Although he left Epstein's employ at the end of the year – after an infernal argument about a limousine – he stayed in contact with the group, a member of the inner circle who was invited back when they decided to put the ideals of 1967 into practice with the formation of Apple Corps. As the go-to person for visitors to its offices at 3 Savile Row, he found himself besieged by a tsunami of supplicants, both legitimate and bizarre.

From the Apple clothing shop through "Hey Jude", the White Album, *Yellow Submarine*, "Get Back", "Let It Be" and The Beatles' anguished disintegration, Taylor was again in the eye of the storm. In April 1970, he gave the official word on The Beatles' split. "Spring is here and Leeds play Chelsea tomorrow and Ringo and John and George and Paul are alive and well and full of hope. The world is still spinning and so are we and so are you. When the spinning stops – that'll be the time to worry. Not before."

Those two and a half years at Apple sorely tested his patience and his belief, but again he remained both a participant and a keen observer. These skills were displayed for all to see in two wonderful books, *As Time Goes By* and *Fifty Years Adrift* which, published in 1973 and 1984 respectively, are essential reading. Taylor had a sure sense not just of stardom and its fascinations, but also the other people who greased the industry's wheels: the producers; the PR men; the radio DJs; the promoters; the fans who brought along their scrapbooks and told their life stories.

With his lust for life also came a sure sense of absurdity. He tells several stories against himself in these books: about being forced to apologise by John Lennon when he finally cracked at Al Capp's rudeness at the June 1969 bed-in; having to admit to an insanely jealous Brian Wilson that The Beatles were always No1 for him and that The Beach Boys could never compete; being roasted by all four Beatles in February 1965 when he turned up with a tape recorder for an unofficial series of interviews in the Bahamas during the filming of *Help!*

Role strain was, indeed still is, common in the music industry. In Los Angeles, Taylor worked as a PR, a confidant and a writer for the expanding pop press, contributing to *Tiger Beat*, *Teen* and *Disc And Music Echo*. "Clean, honest opinions and views made up the bulk of it and in this way I was able to drop in the name of clients who weren't making any waves with their music." He was able to finesse most situations, but when his then employer, Bob Eubanks, asked him to presume on his relationship with The Beatles to get hot quotes, he fell off the high wire.

It was an excruciating encounter. Paul McCartney was particularly brutal. "'Bloody hell,' he said when he saw me. 'Bloody hell, Derek. You with a tape recorder asking us questions?' Oh, yes, me with a tape recorder. The thing was, [what did I represent]? Their friend or a journalist or their ex-publicist, Brian Epstein's ex-personal assistant or a puppet of Bob Eubanks or a man in search of a career in American radio or what?" After enough ritual humiliation, Taylor was readmitted to the fold, where he would stay for the rest of his life.

The 1973 publication of *As Time Goes By* coincided with renewed interest in The Beatles' reputation, which had plummeted after their acrimonious break-up in 1970. That year, the two "Red" and "Blue" double album compilations were released to heavy sales. Over the next decade, EMI would continue to release various compilations and "new" material, including the 1977 No1 album *The Beatles At The Hollywood Bowl*, but the full rehabilitation would not occur until the Eighties.

Taylor had remained close to George Harrison, who contributed addenda to 1984's *Fifty Years Adrift*, a limited-edition book that expanded the Sixties' coverage of *As Time Goes By*. March 1987 saw the first part of The Beatles' reissue programme on CD (*Please Please Me* up to *Revolver*) – a major phase of digital reissues – with the big event scheduled for the 20th anniversary of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in June. It was a huge hit, reaching No3 and staying in the charts for 49 weeks.

Taylor contributed to the celebrations with *It Was Twenty Years Ago Today*, an oral history of *Sgt Pepper*, the summer of love, Monterey pop and the psychedelic explosion that accompanied a summer 1987 Granada TV special. By the mid-Nineties, he had become the keeper of the flame, the public custodian of The Beatles' legacy. Along with George Martin and Neil Aspinall, he was one of only three nonmembers of the band to be interviewed for the *Anthology* documentary.

Taylor's revelation within the walls of the Manchester Odeon was binding for life. There was no turning back. Before anyone else, he understood the importance and the power of The Beatles as a cultural and social phenomenon that went way beyond the then traditional status of pop stars. As an insider, he was savvy enough to both keep notes and write down his memories before they faded. He both participated in the full possibilities of the late Sixties and remained an eloquent witness to the freedom and promises of those now-distant times.

What I love about him is that he was a true believer. As he wrote in 1964, on the inside sleeve of *Beatles For Sale*, "When, in a generation or so, a radioactive, cigar-smoking child, picnicking on Saturn, asks you what the Beatle affair was all about – 'Did you actually know them?' – don't try to explain all about the long hair and the screams! Just play the child a few tracks from this album and he'll probably understand what it was all about. The kids of AD 2000 will draw from the music much the same sense of well-being and warmth as we do today."

Although he may not have realised it at the time, his decision to throw his lot in with The Beatles in 1963 would have a lifelong, and longer, impact. GQ

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EDITED BY **Paul Henderson**

GQ Cars

Blast from the past

STORY BY **Jason Barlow**

A team of just 25 men and women were responsible for Alpine's Renault-backed revival of the classic A110

A forgotten star of Seventies motorsport is poised to return, with a balanced two-seater built to move mountains; plus, the Triumph Speedmaster and Ford's new Mustang Bullitt

Well, this is a result. Somewhere deep in the middle of a French forest, one of Renault Sport's test drivers is doing remarkable things with a familiarly unfamiliar-looking little sports car. Renault's test facility is called Aubevoye – a playground the size of a small town, studded with menacing-looking hangars in which new cars are tortured, then thrashed to the limit on a series of tracks that replicate the worst the real world can throw at them.

Right now, Laurent is on a circuit loop he clearly knows well, judging by the angles he's balancing the car at. He's one of those men who's so expert at placing a car sideways that he won't just be right on the apex of a corner, but all four logos on the wheel centres will be pointing in the correct direction while he does it. At 115mph...

Do you remember Alpine? Possibly not, unless your admiration for cars is equal to your Francophilia. Founded in 1955 by Jean Rédélé and named after the sort of mountain roads he savoured most, Alpine was absorbed into Renault in 1973 and soldiered on via a series of Lotus-like mid-engined sports cars until slipping into obscurity – if not outright oblivion – in the mid-Nineties.

Need to know

Specification Alpine A110

Engine 249bhp four-cylinder, 1.8-litre turbo

Torque 505lb ft

Performance 0-62mph, 4.5 seconds; top speed, 155mph (limited)

Weight 1,080kg

Price £51,000

Contact alpinecars.com

"Alpine is probably best known for its rallying exploits, and then the Le Mans 24 Hours [where it won in 1978]," lead designer Antony Villain tells *GQ*. "I have a clear image in my mind of a really light, agile car drifting in the Monte Carlo Rally."

Now it's being reanimated, fuelled by the same sort of nostalgic ambition and postmodern aesthetic appeal that powered BMW's colossally successful Mini adventure. Except that the all-new A110 is a mid-engined, all-aluminium two-seater sports car, pitching this pretty little Gallic newcomer into battle against the Alfa Romeo 4C, Audi TTS, Lotus Exige and Porsche Cayman. The Alpine team head count is just 25 (though the project would have been a nonstarter without the resources of the Renault mothership), which adds an *esprit de corps* to the comeback story.

Starting from a clean sheet theoretically reduces the compromises and the A110 makes a vivid case for itself. It's also waging a one-car war against the obesity epidemic that's gripped the industry. So the key metric here isn't power (although 249bhp is plenty), it's weight: the Alpine is just 1,080kg in base form, resulting in an eminently useful power-to-weight ratio of 232bhp-per-tonne. An all-new bonded and riveted aluminium chassis helps the cause and the heaviest bits – engine, fuel tank and passengers – are located centrally for a low polar moment of inertia. Even the fuel tank is mounted up front to optimise weight distribution and the centre of gravity is almost exactly midway between the occupant's hips. Power comes from a 1.8-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine; there's a seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox; the brakes are supplied by racing specialist Brembo; and the A110 uses Michelin Pilot Sport tyres. It's proper.

"Mass management," chief engineer David Twohig explains, "from day one, we thought we've got to make a breakthrough on this. Four of us could easily lift this chassis."

'Alpine is best known for its rallying exploits and winning Le Mans 24 Hours'

The Alpine applies decent power-per-tonne through a frame designed to maintain momentum

Inside the French-built two-seater, the finish cannot compete with its German rivals but there is quality where it counts

As with all good cars, you can tell almost instantly that the little Alpine isn't just fun; it's intelligent too. It has an unusually sophisticated suspension setup, with passive rather than active dampers, but with less mass to worry about – none of this stuff has to work so hard in the first place. The Alpine is perfectly self-contained and is a lesson in the objective and subjective benefits that flow from reducing the amount of weight you have to lug around.

It's exhilarating rather than brutally fast, although a 0-62mph time of 4.5 seconds is still impressive and it doesn't run out of puff after that. The game here is oriented around maintaining momentum rather than an all-out assault on speed limits: politically correct and useful for avoiding a spell at Her Majesty's pleasure.

The mid-engined physics demands a degree of skill

A drive-mode button on the steering wheel reconfigures the chassis setup from "Normal" to "Sport" – extra steering heft, sharper gearbox and throttle response – through to "Track", which serves up lairy slip angles without hanging you out to dry should there be a sudden talent vacuum. Or switch off the ESP altogether, at which point the A110's mid-engined configuration and physics demand a reasonable degree of skill. On the road, it'll understeer a little if you push it or arrive at a tight corner with an over-optimistic amount of speed. In other words, there's a margin of error but it doesn't corrupt the core mission.

Problem areas are few. The steering and gearbox are slightly less impressive than the rest of the package and a manual transmission would romanticise the car's character. But hardly anyone does those any more. Alpine has also worked hard to liberate pleasing sonics from the four-cylinder engine.

Inside, the A110 is no Audi or Porsche, but it's better than you might expect. A dinky touchscreen handles infotainment and a central spar houses the powertrain mode and start/stop buttons. Some of the plastics are brittle, but the bits your fingers, hands and eyes interact with most are all sufficiently high quality. The seats are made by Italian specialist Sabelt and weigh 13.1kg each, half the weight of the racy chairs in the Megane RS hot hatch.

That's a mark of the effort and ambition at work here, on what is a magnificent and refreshingly left-field car. Thankfully, not all of 2018's automotive disruptors are powered by electricity.

Triumph: Speedmaster

Hot on the heels of the Bobber – Triumph's fastest-selling bike of all time – is the all-new Speedmaster. Where the Bobber was focused and unforgiving in its nature, the Speedmaster takes the Bobber as a starting point and adds versatility, practicality and even more style. It has swept-back "beach" bars and foot pegs that are positioned slightly further forward for a more relaxed riding style, as well as a pillion seat and a larger tank, allowing you to ride much further between fuel stops.

The Speedmaster keeps all of the traits we loved about the Triumph Bobber – the hard-tail look, a high-torque 1,200cc twin-cylinder engine and classic styling – and combines them with modern technology and fantastic handling. An accessory catalogue chock-full of 150 customisable parts, as well as a range of preconfigured inspiration kits, are available to add your own twist to the Speedmaster. **Rich Taylor**

● **From £11,650. triumph.co.uk**

Ford: Mustang Bullitt

Is *Bullitt* Steve McQueen's best film? Probably not, but it certainly has the best car chase. McQueen was an irredeemable petrolhead and personally cast the Mustang he used to rip through the streets of San Francisco. Fifty years on, the latest Mustang reboot has just been given the *Bullitt* special-edition treatment and, crucially, it's also coming to the UK. The modifications are modest, but more than enough. The 5.0-litre V8 is being nudged towards a 475bhp power output, thanks to a larger throttle body and revised intake manifold and, as on the original, this old-school grunt is funnelled to the road via a six-speed manual transmission, complete with a cue ball-topped shifter. (McQueen was not an automatic kind of man.)

The Mustang Bullitt has upgraded suspension, bigger brakes and racy Michelin Pilot Sport tyres. Exterior revisions run to black magnesium wheels, minimal badging, a "Dark Highland Green" paint job and a retro fuel-filler cap. An active performance exhaust with "Black Nitro" tips is an option, as are magnetic dampers.

Ford enlisted McQueen's granddaughter Molly to star in a short tribute film and *GQ* caught up with her to talk about, well, you know who. "I don't want to sound jaded, but I grew up in LA among lots of celebrities, so my grandpa was always just my grandpa," she says. "He was Grandpa Steve. There were photos of him around the house, just like anyone would have pictures of family around the place. There were lots of stories about him, like most people have about their grandparents, but they were really cool stories – like stories on crack, you know?" **JB GQ**

● **About £45,000. ford.co.uk**

Ford's 50th anniversary Mustang Bullitt revisits one of the silver-screen's true four-wheeled legends

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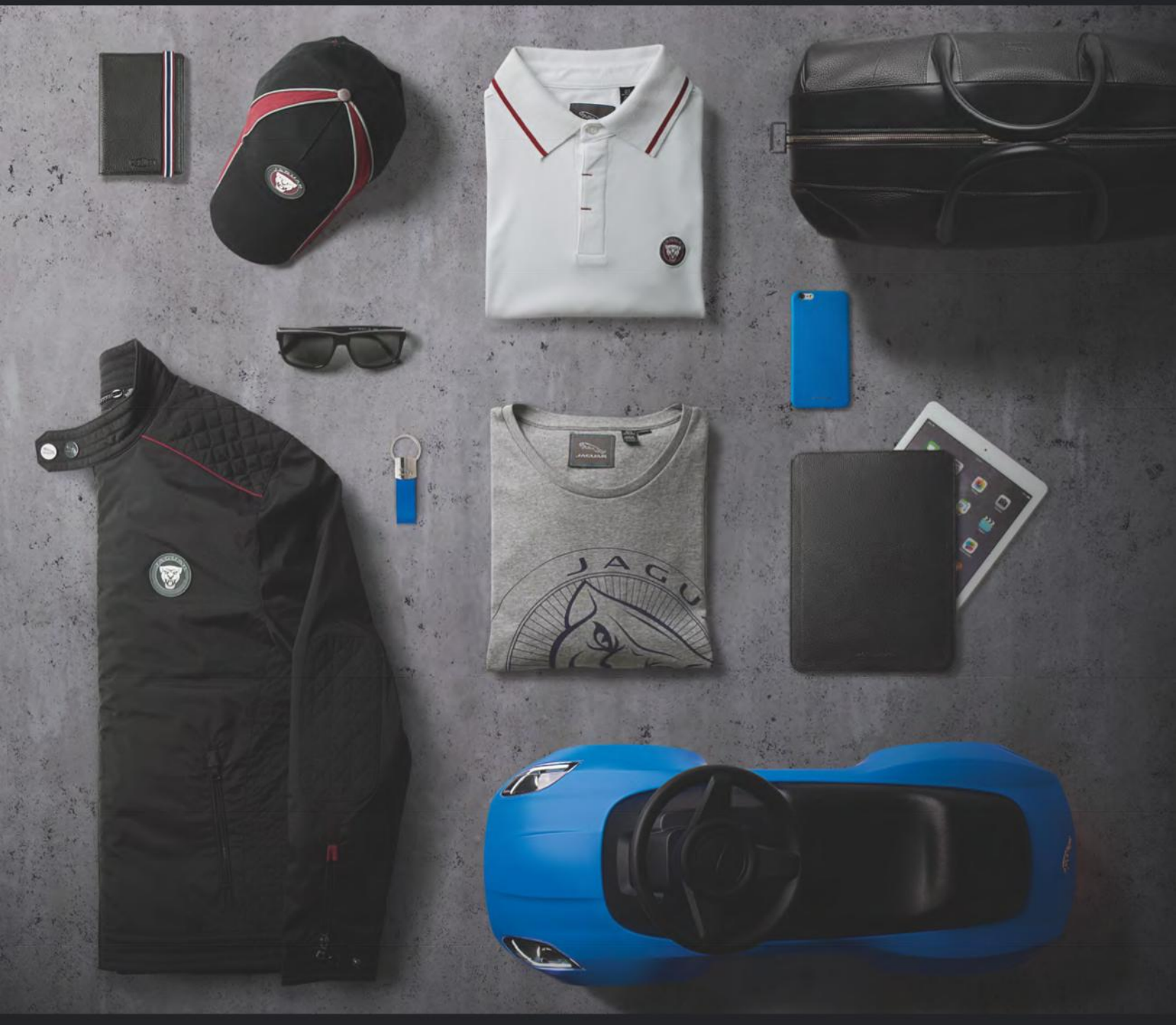

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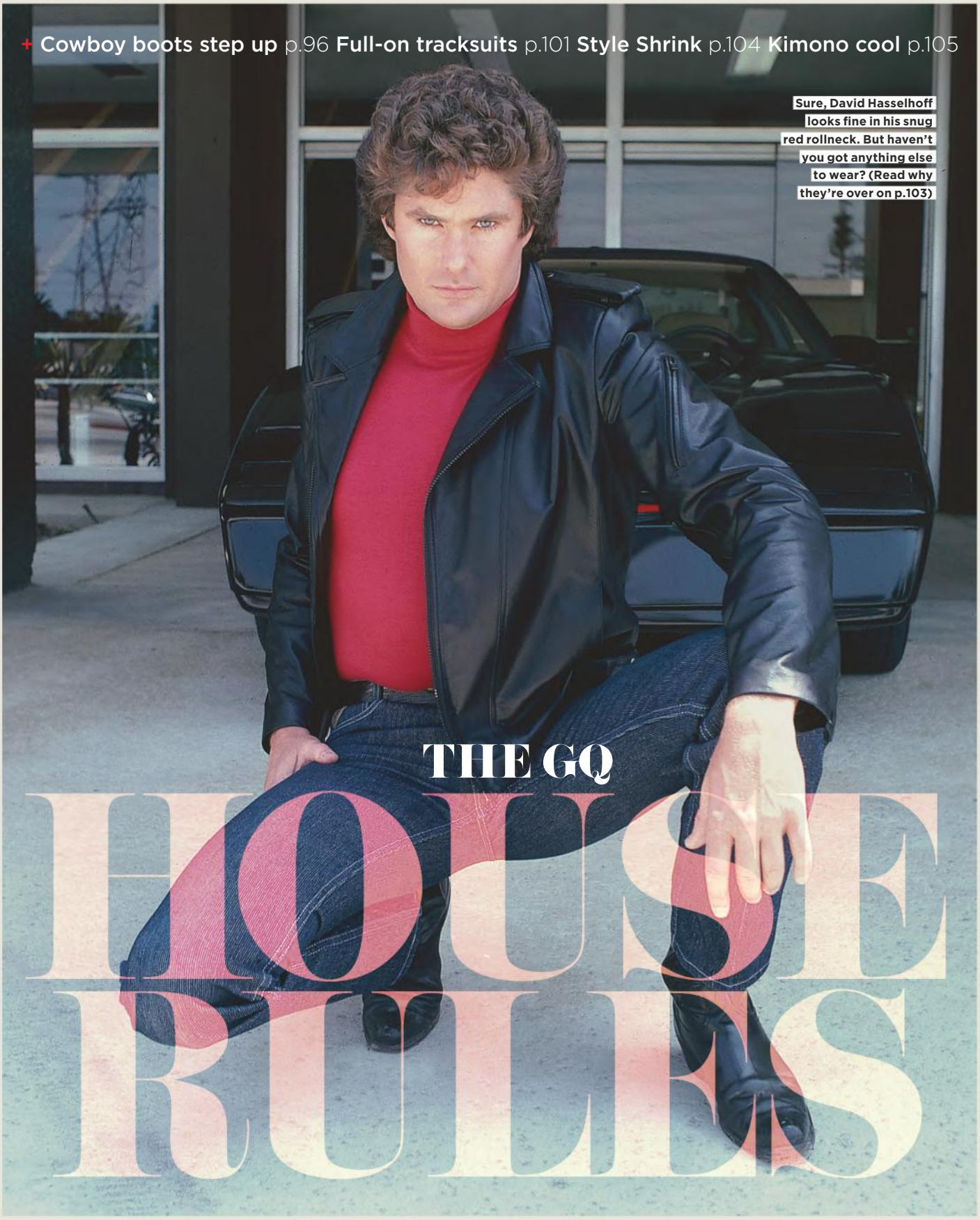


Sure, David Hasselhoff looks fine in his snug red rollneck. But haven't you got anything else to wear? (Read why they're over on p.103)

THE GQ HOUSE RULES

Photograph Getty Images

This is for the style lodestars. The agitators. The peacocks. This section believes in combining an aesthete's eye with an inner rebelliousness. From killer opinion to white-hot trends, these pages are not about following tradition, but beating your own path. You're welcome...

EDITED BY **Jonathan Heaf**

LUXE COWBOY STORE

James Dean in Giant, 1956

Bruce Springsteen, 1979

By **Teo van den Broeke**

Attention, style outlaws: the go-to boot of the rebel generation is back

Mick Jagger, 1964

Cowboy boots appealed to the 'stick it to the man' mood of the time

Clint Eastwood in *The Man With No Name*, James Dean in *Giant*, Heath Ledger in *Brokeback Mountain*: the list of actors who've looked superb wearing cowboy boots in starring roles is a long one. The list of real people who've made cowboy boots look good, on the other hand? Surprisingly short.

I blame Matthew McConaughey. Prior to his 2012 McConaissance – a beautiful thing to witness, we'd all agree – Hollywood's silver-tongued Southern heartthrob would regularly wear oversized leather blazers, bootcut jeans (with unforgivably frayed hems) and cowboy boots on the red carpet. It was a look that was too McConaughey even for McConaughey, who did for the rancher boot what Val Doonican did for the Nordic jumper in the Seventies. As a consequence, cowboy boots have gone to that place where all things once fashionable eventually end up: Diet Prada's IG feed.

It's an unfortunate state of affairs, not least because cowpuncher boots were among the most enduring items in the annals of menswear history (don't blame me, blame the English language). First designed to protect the legs of Western America's cattle-wrangling horseback riders in the 1870s, the shafts of these original boots were made of leather, the soles were heavy and the Cuban-style heels were high enough to stay locked in stirrups.

This combination of function, heritage and Wild Western romance affirmed the cowboy boot as the footwear of choice for a rebel generation. By the Sixties and Seventies, Jagger, Hendrix and Springsteen all regularly sported some kind of take on the style (though usually with a lower, slimmer shaft and less protruding outsole than the heavy-duty originals). These boots were aggressive, unapologetic and appealed to the "stick it to the man" mood of the time. Then? Well, McConaughey knows.

But now, thanks primarily to a few big-name Parisian designers, the cowboy boot is having a rodeo-surgance and Clare Waight Keller, the nascent creative director of Givenchy (who has replaced Riccardo Tisci following his 12-year tenure at the house) is leading the fashionable hoedown. Installed at the 65-year-old Parisian fashion brand early last year, the British designer has impressive previous. She worked at Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren and Gucci before becoming creative director at Pringle (where she turned the Scottish knitwear house's fortunes around). She was subsequently made creative director of women's fashion brand Chloé in 2011. It was at the latter that Waight Keller proved her ability to make vintage styling and bohemian staples feel current and edgy.

Waight Keller showed her first collection (which consisted of both men's and women's looks) for Givenchy last autumn in Paris. "The message for this first collection was to define what I felt was the synergy between men's and women's," she told *GQ*. "The idea of the couple really is strongly rooted in the house. That's something that I want to carry forward."

Teddy-boy bombers, embroidered blazers, Canadian tuxedos, perfecto leather jackets and spray-on skinny jeans aside, it was the boots that shod the models' feet that really stole the show. Finished with a softly pointed toe, a stacked Cuban heel and a slim(ish) shaft, these are the cowboy boots for a new generation. Available in various colours, they're edgy and masculine, sure, but they're also a little effete: less shit-kicking, more kick-ass.

Keller was inspired by Jagger and Springsteen but also David Bowie and Johnny Thunders (of New York Dolls) for her collection and nowhere is this more obvious than in the boots. "There is definitely a rock'n'roll vibe to this first collection that inspired me through the whole process," says Waight Keller. "I am naturally influenced by the musical scene of the late Sixties and early Seventies. I like the easiness of a man in boots. It gives him a certain confidence," she continues. "It's daring but comfortable and playful at the same time. Really, they're a cool, easy boot that you can fuss around in." So, Matthew, seems like all is forgiven. Well, all right, all right, all right.

All boots by **Givenchy**, £750. At Harrods. harrods.com

Photographs Getty Images

Jack Wolfskin
AT HOME OUTDOORS

LOVE THE RAIN *PROTECT THE OUTDOORS*

100%
RECYCLED*

HAYWARD PARKA
waterproof and windproof // highly breathable
long cut // drawcord waist // numerous pockets

* Applies to the outer fabric, membrane and lining.

***RE**SPECT. **RE**CYCLE. **RE**THINK*
WITH THE FIRST 100%
RECYCLED* WEATHER PROTECTION

TEXAPORE ECOSPHERE

jack-wolfskin.com

The COOLEST (ruff-est?) dogs of Instagram

Man's best friend is bossing the internet, but which hound is soundest?

	@poochofnyc	@itsdougthepug	@marniethedog	@loki_the_wolfdog	@babybatters
Followers	117,000	3.2m	2.1m	1.7m	284
Signature style	Resembles a teddy bear / rocks a denim jacket	Squashed face / enjoys posing with fast food containers	Miley Cyrus-style tongue poking	This is the #vanlife of dogs	Named Batman. Has severe underbite. No friends
Breed	Maltipoo	Pug	Shih Tzu	Alaskan Malamute	Could be anything, frankly
Best accessorised with...	A pair of mirrored aviator shades	A leather Dior tote bag	A red Balenciaga oversized hoodie	A longboard, Malibu style	The Batmobile (Michael Keaton era)
Hey, doesn't he/she look like...	Ed Sheeran	Jonah Hill	Cara Delevingne	David Bowie	Michelle Pfeiffer (as Catwoman)

Three ways to wear... a rugby shirt

Prep Skool Rules

Were you a rugger bugger at school? If you were, chances are you spent too much time in your shirt: pre-game, post-game and down the pub in between. In fact, a rugby shirt – minus the blood stains – looks good on most men, hitting the sartorial sweet spot between smart and casual. If you're wearing it to an evening event, however, you need some new rugger-top rules: iron and starch the stiff cotton collar, tuck it into your trousers (ideally, tapered pale chinos) and finish with something like a structured sports jacket. Trainers are fine, but they must be box-fresh and rare.

Posh'N'Roll Star

Think the new wave of designer rugby tops can't be worn by rock stars? You're hanging out with the wrong ones: Mick Jagger got this look spot-on. For the best rock-star-meets-fly-half vibes, take your usual rock'n'roller get-up of midnight-black everything – narrow jeans, vintage leather biker jacket, smoky eyeliner, Chelsea boots – and wear a rugby shirt with a single colour running through it underneath. The key is to ensure the collar is Ariel white. Remember: no hats, or you'll look like a right flanker.

Hipster First XV

We're as surprised as anyone, but Brooklyn Beckham is becoming one of the world's best-dressed men. No, really. His aesthetic is part skate urchin, part East End barista, part hooligan: and when he borrows one of his father's Kent & Curwen reimagined stripy rugby tops he really carries the look off. The trick is in the details: do up the top button, raise the trousers with a long leather belt and pick boots that could stomp all over the other team's dreams. Adding a beanie as a colour pop will give you a certain Parisian insouciance.

Illustrations by **Kasiq Jungwoo**

UP

'God walks out of the room when you're thinking about money'
Quincy Jones reminds us why he's the oracle we all need.

Cinema Paradiso
Vue plans on opening 30 multiscreen cinemas in Saudi Arabia this year.

The London Review Of Books tote
Bigger than Kanye in South Korea.

Triple-white trainers
Or zero-colour sneakers. Prepare to sweat the scuff marks...

The next generation of fashion biopics
First *Franca: Chaos And Creation*, now *Dries* and *Manolo: The Boy Who Made Shoes For Lizards*. Next for 2018: *Westwood: Punk, Icon, Activist*.

Atlanta Monster
Amateur sleuth makes a podcast smash hit about child abductions in the Eighties.

BAROMETER

Screenshot alerts in Instagram Stories
So long, creeping/copying/style-biting in peace.

Metoofoods.com
Houmous doesn't need gender equality. Does it?

Men in beanies wearing T-shirts in March
Take off the woolly hat. Put on a sweater. *Kapeesh*?

Skipping as a serious fitness fad
Yes, Anthony Joshua looks great skipping. You look like a dog riding a unicycle.

Gratuitous wellness
Gold-foiled face sheets from Korea, private FaceTiming sessions with a Goop concierge, isolation baths full of ewes' milk...

Crypto-bants
The end of Bitcoin? The start of Ripple? Invest silently from now on, please.

DOWN

The art of the FULL tracksuit

What unites Marseille gangsters, London grime stars and Hollywood gentlemen-at-large? This suave sports-luxe look

By **Alfred Tong**

Jacket, £770. Trousers, £670. Both by **Gucci**. At mrporter.com

The first time we noticed artist and photographer Marko Righo, he was at a party at the Max Wigram Gallery on New Bond Street, Mayfair, dressed in a bright blue Adidas tracksuit. It was during the 2010 World Cup and Righo swore the tracksuit would stay on until France reached the final. Sadly, *"Les Bleus"* did not pass the group stage. But that tracksuit shone out like a beacon of renegade style in a sea of bland designer luxury.

Fast forward to 2018 and Adidas tracksuits are the subject of Righo's Marseille Tuxedo photography project. Shot entirely on an iPhone, Marseille Tuxedo is street style meets socially conscious reportage. "For some *Marseillais*, the full Adidas tracksuit is more than a fashionable outfit, it is also a social claim," he explains. For Righo, the tracksuit is a symbol of unity in a divided city: "The Adidas tracksuit can be worn by the first-generation Moroccan immigrant and also the guy who supports the Front National. It's a unifier, much like Olympique Marseille FC."

Back in London, the black-on-black Nike tracksuit, with the hood up, is a symbol of no-frills ambition. It's normcore for the hardcore. "It doesn't matter if you're North, South, East or West London, if your clique are banging black-on-black Nike, it means you're definitely about that road life," says Simon Lewis, casting director for Asos. "It's 2018's version of the black suits from *Reservoir Dogs*."

This grass-roots trend is moving from the street to the shows to the stores. This month's cover star Skepta has done tracksuit collaborations with Uniqlo and designer Nasir Mazhar, who created a custom all-black number for the rapper's catwalk debut. *Call Me By Your Name* star Armie Hammer toured Europe wearing a series of one-colour Adidas tracksuits. And at the recent men's shows, industry peacocks were throwing suit jackets and long overcoats over zip-up Seventies trackie tops, helping to dial down the grittier connotations in favour of a sports-luxe suavity.

From *The Sopranos* to *The Business*, the tracksuit has always been a bit lairy, speaking of a life of illicit leisure and luxury. So, whether you're "repping your ends" or just want to soften your structured tailoring a little for spring, a full tracksuit vibe makes total sense. Just don't mention Chas Tenenbaum…

Photographs **Alamy; Backgrid; Peggy Sirota/Trunk Archive**

Armie Hammer in Adidas; (above, from left) Call Me By Your Name director and stars Luca Guadagnino, Armie Hammer and Timothée Chalamet

1,001 manssentials with Nick Foulkes

(because who doesn't need, well, everything?)

THIS MONTH A PURDEY GUN No30453 OVER & UNDER 12-BORE

Weaponise your look with the aristocracy's favourite accessory

Perhaps the most compelling reason I can give for taking up shooting is the equipment and clothing. Let's be clear: I am not a good shot. I do, however, like mechanical gadgets and dressing up. Alas, there is no specific wardrobe for visiting watch factories, but shooting is predicated on a mechanical object that can take as long to make and be as beautiful as a grand complication timepiece and, what is more, comes with a near-limitless scope for sartorial self-expression.

In this watch context, Purdey is Patek Philippe; guns are made for you but you never really own them, you merely look after them for the next generation. Purdey has equipped the aristocracy for generations. There was a time when it was the first luxury brand with which an Englishman became acquainted; a pair of Purdeys – or rather your father's or grandfather's – was the apotheosis of understated status symbols. The firm, rather like its guns, was built to last: it has withstood the bombs of the Luftwaffe and the IRA. Its noble 19th-century store façade appears indifferent to the current limousine-clogged incarnation of Mount Street in London's Mayfair.

A glance in the windows while on your way to lunch at Scott's will not necessarily disabuse you of this *Downton* stereotype. And it is true that Purdey is not liable to rush rashly into change; it still uses the 1880 mechanism for its side-by-side shotguns, although the latest over-and-under mechanism was only introduced in 1950 after the purchase of James Woodward in 1948. Perhaps it was to balance this risky neologism that 13 years ago Purdey went back to the future when it launched the Purdey hammer ejector – recapturing a style of shooting that started to disappear in the 1870s.

Over the past couple of years the business has begun to change in the best possible way, almost imperceptibly. James Horne took over as chairman of Purdey in 2014. Horne, quietly spoken and reserved (except when it comes to discussing cartridges and shot patterns), uses a pair of Purdeys from 1896. You could call him the Elon Musk of British shooting. He is the man behind gunsonpegs.com, the Ebay of shooting, which started in 2006. He's now channelling his knowledge at Purdey, fruit of which is a new shotgun to be launched later in the year.

This is a gun tailored for high bird shooting: a heavy and stable model with long barrels. Moreover, experience has taught him that British shooters are prepared to travel far to shoot, so it will have a trigger plate action that means the action can be dismantled at the push of a button, enabling the owner to put the mechanism in his pocket – handy when travelling to a shoot by train or car.

Ernest Hemingway with his Purdey shotgun, 1948

As befits a man running the world's finest gunmaker, Horne sees life down the rib of a 12-bore. This worldview manifests itself in tiny details as well as huge objects. One of the biggest things available is an oak chest of drawers/portable strongroom for the back of your Range Rover. Equal care is taken with the rubber buttons of the grouse coat, designed so as not to scratch the stock of a Purdey shotgun worth as much as a Bentley. It is such touches that characterise the clothing here.

Purdey still makes the tiny guns King George V used to shoot moths

You need to cart the gear about, so Horne has created a double Gladstone bag that fits guns, dinner jacket, cartridges and has a concealed flask and cigar humidor. At the other end of the spectrum, Purdey still makes the tiny shotguns that King George V used to shoot moths, the triggers of which were pulled using hair pins.

You can see pictures of these Lilliputian weapons in Purdey's Long Room, a museum-like space with a glass ceiling that gives the impression of having just been vacated by the mad king himself. Horne says, "James Purdey used to say that if the gun trade ever went bust it would make a splendid art gallery." In a way, it already is, as with its polished wood and hand engraving, each gun really is a work of art.

Gun by **Purdey**, from £126,000. purdey.com

Photographs **Allstar; Getty Images; Press Association**

Trump's nuclear football: the ultimate man bag?

By **Jonathan Heaf**

It was former *Washington Post* reporter Michael Dobbs who called it "the ultimate power accessory, a doomsday machine that could destroy the entire world". But if "Crooked Hillary" was right about one thing, it was this: "Do we want his [Donald Trump's] finger anywhere near the button?" Those nukes aren't so much controlled by a "button" as by a "biscuit", a credit card-sized piece of plastic containing the codes needed to unleash hell. Yet it's when the prez leaves the White House that the nuclear football comes into action: a large leather, aluminium-frame briefcase that is dragged about by a military aide. Inside are five items: the retaliatory options, classified site locations, instructions for the Emergency Broadcast System, the launch codes and a copy of *Fire And Fury* by Michael Wolff. OK, not the last one. The original case is bespoke by Zero Halliburton, the Utah firm that also supplied aluminium cases for *Men In Black*. Still, we thought The Donald's man bag could do with a serious promotion. Well, if we can't swap the actual president, the least we can do is upgrade his luggage.

Bag by **Smythson**, £1,595. smythson.com

Bag by **Montblanc**, £1,285. At mrporter.com

Bag by **Gucci**, £2,250. gucci.com

From left: Johannes Huebl, Ryan Reynolds and Ryan Gosling

Death to all ROLL NECKS!

What worked for Mick Jagger in 1965 will do you no favours in 2018; (below left) Steve Buscemi and Peter Stormare in Fargo

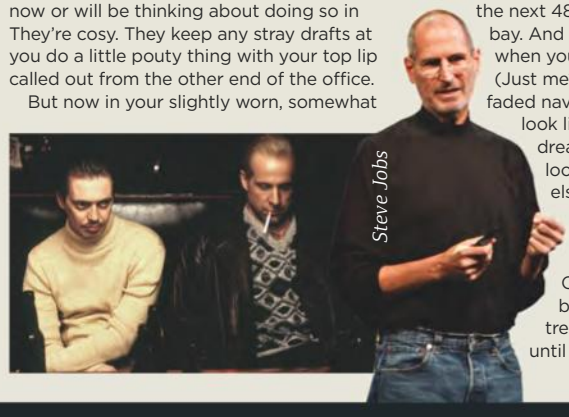
By **Jonathan Heaf**

Like the screaming lambs escaping from the eclectic wands of Chris Pratt's slaughter house – no? Check his IG feed, slowcoach – spring brings with it a degree of relief. As the air becomes warmer and the nights longer (it'll happen), men can begin to imagine a world in which wearing a navy peacoat every day is but a banished recurring nightmare.

Think of the seasonal changeover – that's now, by the way – as a time when you rip those old itchy threads off your pale, sun-starved carcass and throw them onto the bonfire. Add lighter fuel and *whoosh*. Men need to embrace this change in weather and wardrobe wholeheartedly. Remember: summer clothes aren't just for vacations.

Yet of all the autumnal sartorial crutches we lean on the heaviest, the rollneck has become a man's most efficient wardrobe choice. Nothing looks as cool nor is as easy to wear. Never before has one item of clothing saved so many mediocre outfits. Nor can any other piece of knitwear (not even the ubiquitous grey crewneck beloved by athleisure style kings) turn brutish male physicality into a thing of élan: see Jean-Paul Belmondo, Sir Michael Caine and David Hasselhoff. The thing is, anyone can look like a French beatnik in a rollneck, even coffee baristas from Dulwich. But *enough*. We have reached peak rollneck. Look out across the office and eight out of ten men will either be wearing a rollneck right now or will be thinking about doing so in the next 48 hours. Listen, we get it. They're cosy. They keep any stray drafts at bay. And you love the way it makes you do a little pouty thing with your top lip when you hear your name being called out from the other end of the office. (Just me?)

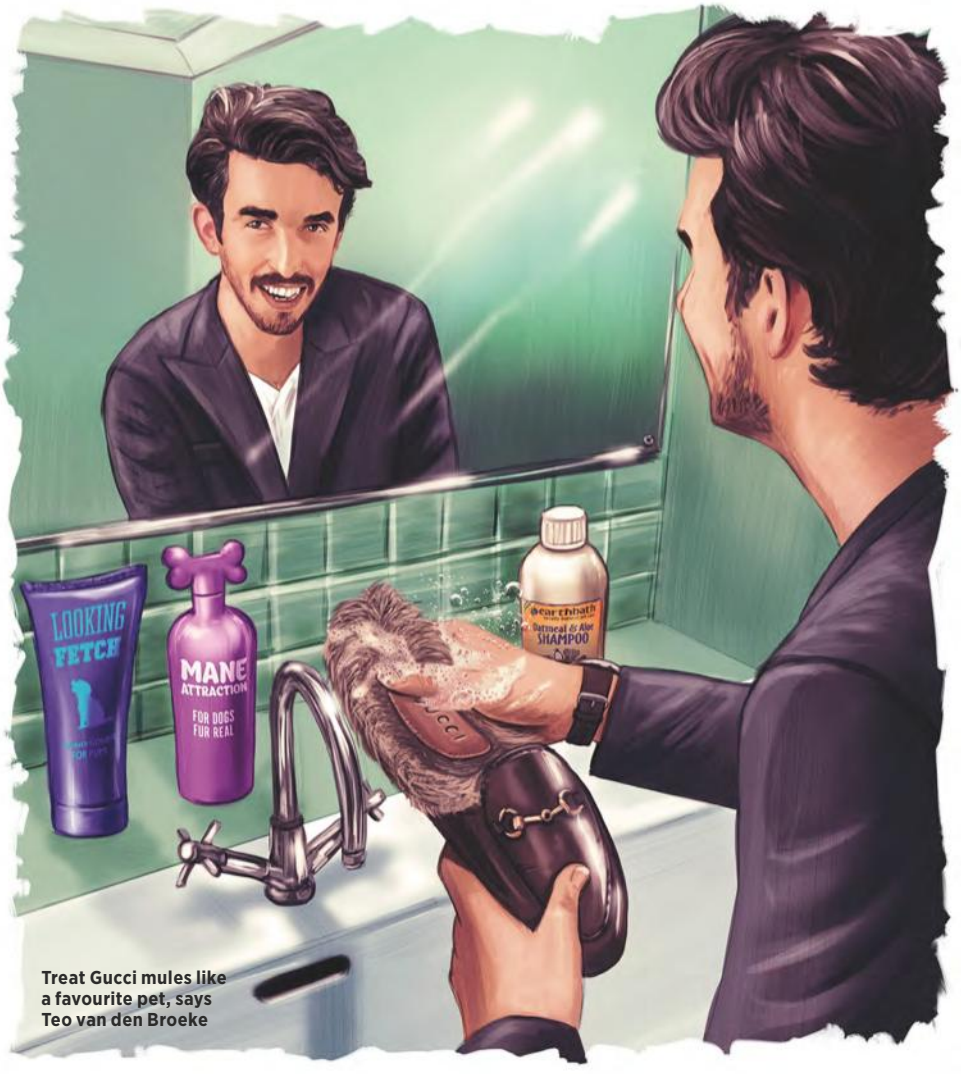
But now in your slightly worn, somewhat faded navy merino rollneck, you look like that thing you always dreaded becoming: you look just like everyone else. So take it off. Fold it neatly. And then place it into a moth-resistant, zip-lock storage bag. On the outside write in a bold, black Sharpie: "Dead trend: do not resuscitate until October 2018."



Steve Jobs

The business case for... a tan cotton suit

Now it's time to smarten up for summer, be aware: nothing moves with the mercury quite as elegantly as a crisply tailored cotton suit. Why? Precisely because it's not linen (too relaxed for work and mightily prone to sagging) or, worse, seersucker (face it: you're not Tom Wolfe). Why tan? Because cotton works best in a neutral tone, a fact not lost on our Italian friends and, by extension, Antipodean tailor P Johnson, an expert in the "lightweight wardrobe" which, along with many of Italy's go-to garment makers, is a customer of Tuscan atelier Sartoria Carrara, probably the greatest exponent of shirt-soft tailoring. In addition to a ready-to-wear line, P Johnson now offers a made-to-measure service at its new London outpost. Bill Prince ***51-52 Rathbone Place, London W1. pjt.com***



Treat Gucci mules like a favourite pet, says Teo van den Broeke

Style Shrink

BY **Teo van den Broeke**

I'm in the market for a double-breasted suit but I'm struggling to find anything that looks good on me. I'm tall so assumed, having read a few pieces on tailoring, that double-breasted would work well, but I'm also an ex-rower with a diet that consists primarily of chocolate biscuits, cocktail sausages and Pop-Tarts. I have broad shoulders but also something of a gut. Can I do double-breasted? And if so, how? ***SGR, by email***

Dear Sir,

I feel your pain. As a tall man with a Whole Foods Parmesan crisps problem and child-bearing hips, I am only too aware of the many pitfalls our body type presents when it comes to fine tailoring.

Double-breasted is tricky to pull off at the best of times. On a long, lean frame with the lumps and bumps in all the right places, a DB suit will wrap the body and have a slimming effect. Add a belly into the equation and the look will be ruined before you can say "double-decker Oreos". The enveloping nature of this type of tailoring means that there's nowhere for extra weight to hide; the fabric will pull around any protrusions and draw attention to them rather than conceal them.

On a frame such as yours I would suggest a single-breasted, deconstructed jacket with minimal padding in the shoulder. This will create a sense of balance between your upper body and your waist. The Italians are particularly good at deconstructed tailoring so a few places to look this season would be Brunello Cucinelli (if you've got money to spend) or Boglioli (for slightly shallower pockets). A wool- and alpaca-blend jacket from the former would work well, as the supple fabric will drape across lumps rather than stretch over them. Alternatively, one of the latter's stretch-cotton twill jackets will allow for minor fluctuations in weight.

If you're determined to go double-breasted, opt for something with plenty of extra fabric around the middle and a very soft shoulder. Also, be sure to wear the jacket open. Australian tailor P Johnson does a great line in deconstructed double-breasted suits and they're designed to be worn unfastened.

Colour-wise, always opt for dark shades such as navy or charcoal: they're far more flattering and will cover a whole manner of sins (Pop-Tart-related sins in particular). And for pity's sake, man, get back in the boat!

How do I clean the insides of my fur-lined Gucci mules? They're starting to smell. ***A Michaels, Birmingham***

Dear Mr Michaels,

A very light lather of Earthbath's oatmeal and aloe pet shampoo followed by a going-over with a hairdryer (at a low heat) will do the trick. (*NB: None of the methodology has been tested on any of our own items. It goes without saying, we oppose all forms of cruelty against high-end luxury items.*)

I love a white sock. Always have, always will. I know it's sometimes frowned upon to wear them but I just can't get enough. Can you tell me, once and for all, when is it OK to wear white socks? ***Thomas, Taunton***

Dear Thomas,

You've probably heard murmurings that white socks are making a comeback, and while this may be true, it's a trend that should be approached with caution. I personally have a deep aversion to white socks: my dad used to wear his with old boat shoes he bought from the back of a weekend supplement, which inspired such a distaste in me that I would regularly steal bundles of his white socks and hide them under my bed. Also, when I was asked, at the age of four, to wear white stockings and shorts to my aunt's wedding, I cried throughout the ceremony.

Personal prejudices aside, there are occasions when white socks can look great (my teeth are firmly gritted as I type). A pair of white silk socks worn with velvet slippers and a tux will jazz up a black-tie look, while white tube socks worn with heavy-tread penny loafers and cropped stone-wash jeans will look very Spring 2018. The easiest way to wear a white sock, however, is with cropped blue chinos and a pair of high-top Converse All Stars – never, ever with a pair of boat shoes.

Illustration **Sam Gilbey**

KIMONOS!

Judo-chopping style right in the zeitgeist

By **Tom Stubbs**

Crash! A great Hokusai wave of kimono-influenced style is breaking onto menswear's shores. And its new era – hybrid, conceptual and just a little bit out there – marries well with current moods and values.

There's a reason the kimono is big in Japan, where I also developed a taste for them. Simultaneously classic and modern, their draped style is at the intersection of where elegance and sophisticated fabric meet minimal restriction. Factor in they're gender-fluid and can command dressy evening clout without looking remotely stuffy and *kapow*!

Wearing a kimono as a Caucasian in London, however, is a trickier feat. To be clear – no one wants to be accused of tone-deaf cultural appropriation here – Japanese men aside, kimonos have previously been the preserve of eccentric musicians, such as Brian Eno, David Bowie and, more recently, Kendrick Lamar, who wore a 2015 Craig Green kimono-inspired jacket at this year's Grammy Awards.

Yet for us straighter goers, solutions are on hand. The way forward is to mix and blend your style with new hybrid designer strains. Some top-thinking modernist chaps are already doing it in an uptown street style. Dean Cook, menswear buying manager at Browns, is a kimono believer and has bought into pieces such as Curieux's Ripple Noragi kimono cardigan (*right*) and Visvim's Noragi Chambray shirt. These pieces are easy to drop into conventional ensembles with jeans and trainers but, vitally, they also work that layered, slouchy thing via their wrap format.

"Think of it as an overgrown cardigan," designer T-Michael (of Norwegian Rain) tells me. "It works practically with everything." Adrien Sauvage is another designer riffing with the kimono. His new black silk robe has kimono characteristics and is both relaxed and glamorous, working in place of a smoking jacket or layered eveningwear. Is this the new tuxedo?

My point is, if, like me, you're bored of formal tailoring casting men as black velvet sofas with arms and legs, or you've been wearing increasingly slashed and fancy shirts in lieu of party attire, then "going kimono" is the next plausible step on your road to louchedom. Kimonos are effectively evening jackets with the stuffed shirt and tie bit filleted out. As we unbuckle ourselves from a traditional macho stance, isn't that bow-tie thing starting to look bumptious?

'Going kimono' is the next plausible step on your road to louchedom

Above: Kimono cardigan by **Curieux**, £1,630. At Browns. brownsfashion.com; **(right) Kendrick Lamar at this year's Grammy Awards**

Photographs **Getty Images**

The Hermès of hash

You're dining at the Chateau Marmont and in between courses the beautiful woman you're flirting with indicates that she likes to get high. What are you going to do? Skin up a joint? Pull out a crumpled £10 bag of skunk? Much better to offer her a discreet hit on your Beboe sativa vaporiser, whose sleek, rose-gold design looks more like something that dispenses perfume than a bong. In California, where marijuana has been legal for recreational use since 2016, a growing sector has emerged to service the very specific needs of the haute bohemian stoner. Among actors, screenwriters and people who work in style, smoking marijuana is now a chic lifestyle choice with the luxury accessories to match. And Beboe's credentials are more fashionable than most. Cofounder Clement Kwan was previously business projects manager for Dolce & Gabbana and then president of online luxury retailer Yoox North America, while his business partner, Scott Campbell, is a prolific tattoo artist who has inked everyone from Penelope Cruz to Marc Jacobs. What's more, fashion's investment fairy godmother Carmen Busquets, an early investor in Net-A-Porter, also holds a stake in the company, as does actress Rose McGowan. Beboe offers three main products: the Sativa Vaporizer, which has been formulated for daytime use; the Indica Vaporizer for downtime; and Sativa Pastilles for a barely perceptible "take the edge off"-type high. All beautifully packaged with a Jony Ive eye. **AT**

From left: Indica Vaporizer, £43. Sativa Pastilles, £18. Box Set, £72. Sativa Vaporizer, £43. All by **Beboe**. beboe.com

Jim Chapman is the GQ

Test Pilot

This month: body shaving

I would say that I have a moderately hairy chest. On a scale of hairy people, I fall somewhere between Tom Selleck and Nick Jonas – a few curls shy of Sean Connery. It takes a trim to keep it all ship-shape, but my body topiary is exclusive to areas I deem acceptable; thus far I have only let the razor stray to my shoulders or back. In the interest of being *GQ*'s Test Pilot, however, I decided to get streamlined and dive into the murky waters of chest-shaving.

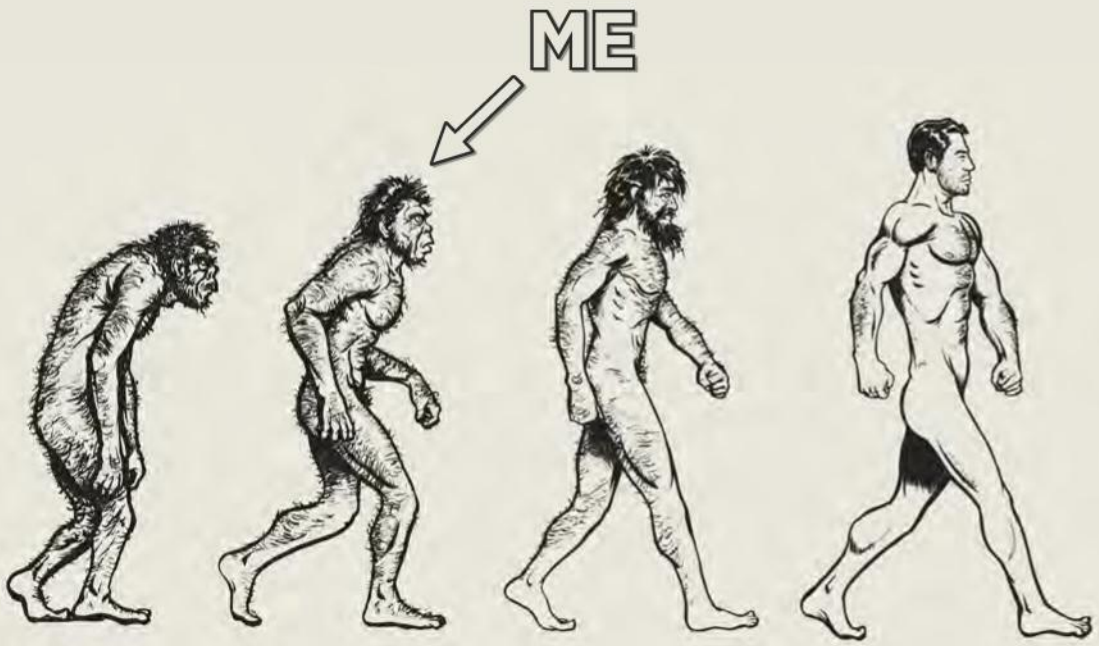
It turns out that shaving in the shower presents a challenge: what do you use as lubricant? Most men reach for shampoo, conditioner or shower gel. I tried all three. They all sucked. As you would expect, they simply wash away before the razor gets anywhere close to hitting skin. These products are made for cleansing your body and no one wants to find stubborn, soapy gel stuck to them when they're dry and dressed. The conditioner did leave a slippery film behind, so it fared best in terms of longevity, but its effects were still too short-lived, and it quickly clogged up my razor. So, we have a problem. Lack of lubricant makes for an unpleasant shave which, in turn, leads to irritation in the days that follow. A sore chest is no one's idea of a good time.

Enter the products I have been rigorously testing: the Nivea Men Body Shaving range. Three items, all geared up to make shaving in the shower faster, easier and less itchy. The standout product for me is the Anti-Irritation Shaving Stick (*£6 for 75ml*). Think slippery deodorant. Apply to wet skin and a layer of lubrication is left in its wake. Stand under the shower and it stays put until you either shave it off or wash it away with your hand. It's transparent upon application, so you're much less likely to slice off a nipple and you can see any spots you've missed. Also, seeing as it won't leak, it's travel-friendly for trips to the gym or further afield. Whether you're shaving your chest to show off your pecks or keeping your legs smooth to reduce drag when on your bike, this stick can always keep you company.

The Anti-Irritation Shaving Gel (*£6 for 200ml*) is something we will all be more familiar with. It looks and feels like a regular shaving gel with the key difference being that it leaves lubricating polymers on the skin that are resistant to running water. I didn't trust it at all to begin with. How can a gel, pretty much indistinguishable from any other, hang around in conditions that wash the rest away? The answer is, I have no idea, but it does. It falls into an uncanny valley of sorts. You know how it should behave and, for the most part, it does exactly what you expect – facilitates a good shave – but there is more to it than experience tells me to expect. At first, I found myself constantly checking as I was shaving, making sure it was all present and slidey, but after using it a few times I decided that it's science or magic or a small miracle. I have learned to trust in the lube.

Of course, shaving is only half the battle. Dragging sharp metal along the contours of your body isn't particularly great for your skin. It's actually half the reason I have a bit of a beard; I say "a bit" because it's longer than stubble but not quite impressive enough to qualify as a beard. When I wet shave, my skin gets irritated and I get spots. This is where the Anti-Irritation After Shave Lotion (*£5 for 240ml*) comes in. It's a lightweight lotion that moisturises thoroughly and absorbs into your skin pretty much instantly. It actively helps your skin to rebuild the protective layer that shaving cuts through. Personally, I've experienced zero shaving rash and next to no redness while using it, which is good because I've also decided that my chest looks a little more chiselled when bald. Who knows, maybe I'll ditch the chest-fro for good. *niveamen.co.uk*

Shaving in the shower presents a challenge: what do you use as lubricant?



Photographs **Getty Images; Pixeleyes; Rex** Illustration **Ricardo Fumanal**

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Why are you such a SNOB about LA style?*

By **Jonathan Heaf**

***You're not? So why do you pretend you've never heard of Amiri?**

Designer whizz-kid Mike Amiri doesn't want to be the new Hedi Slimane – got that, Diet Prada? Sure, some of his clothes might be an "homage" to a particular aesthetic that Slimane made so covetable at Saint Laurent – say, an androgynous, skinny-jeaned fairy tale cooked up in a Parisian squat – but that's because Amiri and Slimane share similar core ambitions: to make rock stars of us all (or at least our wardrobes).

Amiri's bombastic take on menswear comes at a time when a new breed of West Coast designer is ruling the rails in global retail. So-hot-it-hurts streetwear brands such as Fear Of God and Heron Preston are forcing customers, buyers, stylists and, yes, journalists to look again at California and reconsider all their snooty ideas about its style scene. Of course, it's not difficult to understand where such pretensions come from. A great deal of the blame can be apportioned to one Christian Audigier (RIP), the French designer based in California who was responsible for the sequin-heavy Ed Hardy label and the ludicrously successful – yet ultimately grotesque – Von Dutch.

So what's so different about Amiri's approach? Well, a great deal of what was wrong with the Juicy Coutures and the Ed Hardys of the hyper-showy LA fashion scene was not only the gaudiness of their designs but also the materials used, resulting in cheap, factory-pumped clothes that felt about as desirable as a celebrity up-skirt snap taken outside 1 Oak at 4am. No, Amiri's designs might have that vintage rare-find vibe about them, but the materials used are 100 per cent luxury.

Amiri takes something precious and then messes with it. He destroys a jacket or unstitches a pair of jeans, before rebuilding them in his own vision, adding intricate linings, triple washes and rarefied upticks. This is a designer who works like an artist or, at least, an artist who is unafraid to wield a firearm. "What would cashmere look like," he muses, "if I blasted it with a shotgun?" The results illustrate an originality that is, at times, hard to find in a city such as LA.

Jacket, £1,516. Shirt, £325. T-shirt, £295. All by **Amiri**. At Harvey Nichols. harveynichols.com. Jeans by **Amiri**, £895. At Browns. brownsfashion.com. Shoes by **Amiri**, £1,003. mikeamiri.com

Ilaria Urbinati

You know movie stars can't dress themselves, right?

It wasn't long ago that, for men, dressing for the red carpet was roughly akin to dressing for a football match: you either wear the home kit (black tux) or the away (midnight blue). Just don't mix the two and you're good. And, sure, there are outliers (hi, Jared Leto!) – but all-too-few true innovators. Step forward one Ilaria Urbinati, the 38-year-old LA super-stylist advising the cream of Hollywood. Her first client was Bradley Cooper – who visited her boutique and asked for help dressing for *The Hangover* press tour. Soon she boasted a client list that included Ryan Reynolds, Tom Hiddleston, Donald Glover, Riz Ahmed, Rami Malek, Chris Evans, The Rock and Armie Hammer. Indeed, every time you see a Best-Dressed List winner looking dapper on the red carpet, chances are it's down to her. For 2018, brown is the new black. But then so is red. And purple too. And pretty much any other colour, "As long as you co-ordinate," she says. Hiddleston – a perennial best-dressed list top-fiver – called Urbinati "one of the best things ever to happen to me". Which is only fair: she's also the best thing to happen to the red carpet since Robert Downey Jr went to the 1989 Oscars dressed as Peter Pan. Stuart McGurk GQ

Clockwise from top left: Donald Glover; Tom Hiddleston; Rami Malek

The GQ Preview: April

EDITED BY **HOLLY ROBERTS**

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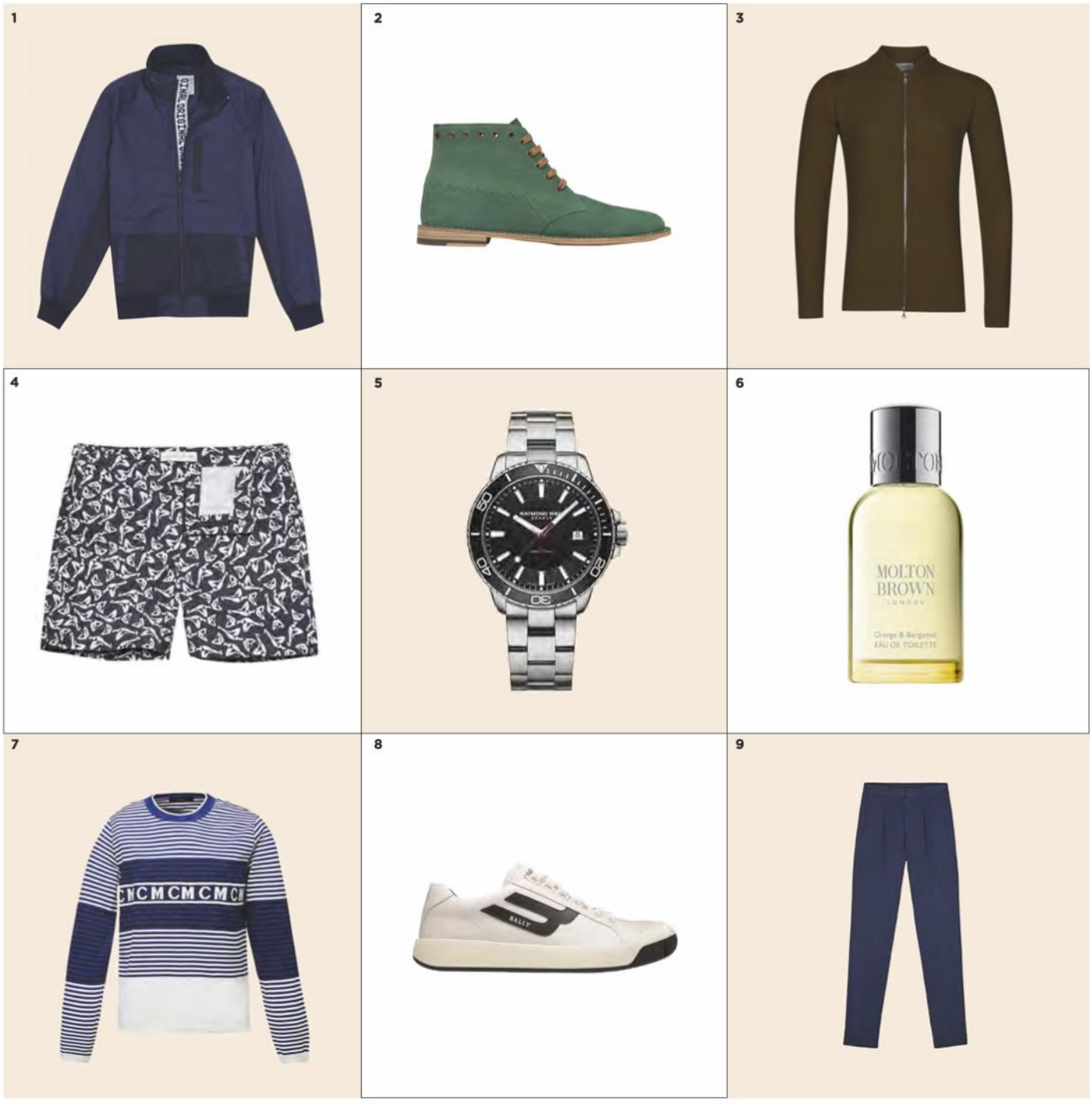

1 ▸ Jacket by **Original Penguin**, £130. originalpenguin.co.uk **2** ▸ Boots by **Bottega Veneta**, £650. bottegaveneta.com
3 ▸ Jumper by **John Smedley**, £220. johnsmedley.com **4** ▸ Swim shorts by **Orlebar Brown by Daniel Ricciardo**, £195. orlebarbrown.com
5 ▸ Tango 300 Diver watch by **Raymond Weil**, £950. raymond-weil.com **6** ▸ Orange & Bergamot Eau De Toilette by **Molton Brown**, £39 for 50ml. moltonbrown.co.uk
7 ▸ Jumper by **MCM**, £375. mcmworldwide.com **8** ▸ Trainers by **Bally**, £275. bally.co.uk **9** ▸ Trousers by **Michael Kors**, £170. michaelkors.co.uk

Junior Retail Editor **Michiel Steur**

We love

Louis Vuitton's Run Away trainers

It is often the simplest things that are the hardest to perfect, but this season Kim Jones at Louis Vuitton shows us exactly how it's done. Fuss free and fit for purpose, the latest addition to the Run Away trainer collection is the only pair you'll need. Cut from soft white calf skin and beautifully enhanced by tan leather accents, they're the simple runner you have been looking for. The key to styling them? Don't be shy. Team with everything, from tailoring to track trousers and all that's in between.

Trainers by **Louis Vuitton**, £710.
louisvuitton.co.uk

Photograph **James Day**

30-32 Rue du Sentier, 75002 Paris, France Thehoxton.com

Trousers by **Woolrich**. £115, woolrich.eu

Denim jacket by **Levi's**. £120. levi.com

Grandes Complication watch by **Breguet**. Price on application. breguet.com

Mac by **Pretty Green**. £150. prettygreen.com

Bag by **VLTN**. £1,450, valentino.com

Boots by **Crockett & Jones**, £370. crockettandjones.com

How to

Pack for a Parisian city break

Established in Shoreditch in 2006, The Hoxton is a series of open house hotels inspired by the diversity and originality of the streets and scenes that surround them, with its latest addition in Paris being no exception. Nestled on Rue du Sentier in a converted clothing factory, the building was lovingly restored to its French beauty over a four-year period, while Humbert & Poyet and Soho House were enlisted for those contemporary finishing touches. Packing for a weekend away is no mean feat, especially when your destination will more than likely see both sun and showers. Be sure to achieve Parisian style with ease in a perfectly picked selection of layers. This mac from Pretty green is the perfect starting point, keeping you safe from the showers but still suitably stylish. Team with navy tailored trousers and throw your city break essentials into this VLTN canvas shopper.

30-32 Rue du Sentier, 75002 Paris, France Thehoxton.com

Retail Editor **Holly Roberts**

Russell&Bromley

LONDON

‘This idea about cheerful thinking... it’s a think-tank to help show people things can be better’

Ed Miliband photographed for British GQ in London, 29 January

Grooming Gianni Scumaci

THE
ALASTAIR CAMPBELL
INTERVIEW

Ed Miliband

No longer gagged by the weight of high office, Labour's last ex-leader is speaking freely. With a rampantly popular podcast and his wise-cracking Twitter feed laying body blows on opponents past and present, the backbench nearly-man has reasons to be cheerful

PORTRAIT BY
David Bailey

To be fair to Jeremy Corbyn, he wasn't the first serving Labour leader to reject my request for an interview for *GQ*. So did Ed Miliband. The reasons may be different – Corbyn's political, perhaps; Miliband's, the fact that, at the time, I was helping him prepare for a general election campaign and he thought it would be odd if we had a rumbustious bust-up in print. But with the passing of time, a new, less buttoned-up Miliband is emerging, and now he was keen to talk, though hopeful I wouldn't spend too long revisiting arguments of the past, when he worked for Gordon Brown and I for Tony Blair and he was known as "The Emissary From Planet Fuck" or the rows when he was leader, provoked by my feeling he didn't defend New Labour's record enough.

It is three years since a life-changing election defeat. One day, he thought he was going to be PM. The next, he was trying to work out what former future PMs do with the rest of their lives. He has remained an MP, but is also using his podcast, *Reasons To Be Cheerful*, to try to generate debate about big new ideas. Before our interview, I went to see him record the podcast in front of a live audience. They liked him and his ideas in a way the electorate did not in sufficient numbers when he needed them most. But he seemed happy enough. He is also more confident than I am that Labour is heading for power and relishing the prospect. He is not as fired up as I am about Brexit, but he is ready to take to the barricades against Donald Trump. And he remains as baffled as I am about why that bloody bacon sandwich became such a big thing.

AC: So, Ed. What reasons to be cheerful did you find the day after you lost the election?
EM: I didn't feel that cheerful, actually. The truth is I felt a sense of shock.
AC: You thought you were going to win?
EM: Yeah. I wasn't certain, but the polls coming in that day seemed quite positive. So no, I didn't feel cheerful. You do feel the burden of leadership has been lifted. But yeah, it was pretty hard.
AC: Do you ever get over it?
EM: You move on, I think. I have moved on. But it took a year, really. The 2017 election was an inflection point because it meant the last election was not my election. I felt I could still make a contribution with ideas. I didn't know how and it has taken me some time to work that out. There were things that mattered to me about the future of the country: inequality, what the post-financial crisis settlement would be. I still felt strongly about all that. You know in *The West Wing*, Arnie Vinick, the Republican candidate, he goes from losing an election to going to Starbucks the next day and they say, "What's your name?" And he says, "Arnie", and they say, "Coffee for Ernie." And he's sort of forgotten and he has a dentist's appointment in his diary and that's about it. It's slightly like that. You are going at 100mph, every minute of the day, and then you crash.
AC: So if leader of Labour is like being Man City, where is "Doncaster backbench MP doing a podcast and trying to stay relevant"?
EM: I don't think I would make that comparison.
AC: But as someone said when you were ››

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›› recording the podcast, you could have been at Chequers or heading off to China.
EM: For the first year or two, that is quite painful. Now, it bounces off me. Before, I'd have felt regretful and would've ruminated.
AC: The audience liked you and your ideas in a way maybe they didn't before. Is this you trying to enjoy being popular?
EM: I am not sure it's about being popular. It is nice to be liked. It is more about the big ideas I still care about and how do I find a medium for them? Also, it allows me some self-reflection. I felt my analysis was big – inequality, stagnant wages, next generation doing worse than the last – but my response was not big enough, not bold enough.
AC: What would you have done differently and would it have helped you win?
EM: Might have done. I think I'd have been clearer about the mission, bolder in solutions, tuition fees, rail nationalisation. I am proud of the 2015 manifesto and some of it has been adopted by both parties. But this is why I give some credit to Jeremy Corbyn on this. People want bigger, bolder answers to the problems that exist. I felt as leader: "My analysis is big; are the answers big enough?"
AC: What is the boldness in what Corbyn is saying? In a sense, it is regression to some old-fashioned ideas.
EM: Free university education.
AC: Sure, lots of things people would like.
EM: They've said how they would pay for it.
AC: Have they? I thought this idea that the manifesto was fully costed was, if I may say so, a brilliant piece of spin.
EM: But what makes you say that? They published a whole set of figures.
AC: I don't believe it added up to a coherent plan.
EM: I don't agree with that.
AC: You felt it was deliverable.
EM: Yes.
AC: And if he goes to the next election on that manifesto he will win?
EM: Yes, I think you can, building on it. He can't do it alone and part of my responsibility, and that of anyone who wants a Labour government, is to help him come up with the ideas to change the country. Part of what I am trying to do with the podcast is be a kind of facilitator, provide a platform for those ideas.
AC: So it's a think-tank for the modern age?
EM: Yes.
AC: It is entertainment, ultimately.
EM: No. It is maybe entertain*ing*, but it is about how you get an audience and how you get people to know about – and become advocates for – big ideas. Universal basic income, where you replace the complicated means-tested social security system with one payment to everyone, lots of people advocate it for an age of tech and disappearing jobs – we had 100,000 downloads of our podcast on that. Most think-tanks would dream of that kind of engagement with an idea. This idea about cheerful thinking, a digital platform for people to present their ideas, organise events around the country, that is what I am focused on building, a digital think-tank for the modern age that can help show people things can be better, the world can be different.
AC: They also want to see political leadership with a plan to deliver that. I accept Jeremy Corbyn...
EM: Come on, you were surprised.
AC: I was surprised Theresa May was as terrible as she was. I was surprised the Lib Dems imploded. I was surprised he campaigned as well as he did. That, to be frank, made me very angry he had not campaigned like that in the referendum.
EM: If we had sat here a year ago, and I said to you he was going to get 40 per cent of the vote, you would have sent me packing.

'There are people in the media trying to kill you every single day. That is their job'

AC: Probably. But what happened out of the result is this sense we won, when we didn't, and I haven't seen much since the election that takes him to the next level.
EM: The fundamental point about our time is to understand why he did so much better than you or I expected, and possibly he expected as well. And that is because he was giving people a sense that he had answers big enough, bold enough, honest enough, for the moment we are in. Whether you agree with all the answers or not, that is fundamentally the insight he has.
AC: And we will do everything people want with a bit more tax on the rich and on business? I don't think that's credible.
EM: Hang on a minute. Let's take the corporation tax. It is falling to 17 per cent...
AC: I am not saying don't increase tax; I'm saying, "Can you do all of these things with a bit more tax on the rich?"
EM: You can't do everything, but you can do what he set out. Humility is important and we should give him credit for what he has achieved. [Pollster] Peter Kellner wrote after the election that all the rules had been torn up. Tony Blair said the same, the idea there was only one way to win, a certain version of the political centre.
AC: I put it as part of the same phenomenon as Trump...
EM: And Brexit.
AC: Definitely Brexit, people looking for something clear and certain. My point is whether it is credible and whether it goes with the grain of what you and I through our adult lives have believed to be the Labour Party. I sometimes feel like an alien inside my own party.
EM: Why do you feel that? About the agenda? Most of Europe nationalised rail. I am sure I had conversations with you when you said the rail network is a nightmare. You are not against that.
AC: I am against him saying he can't do it inside the EU.
EM: But why do you feel alienated? This is an interesting thing...
AC: I think they are quite sectarian in their politics. I had a bit of a eureka moment when I did *Question Time* with John McDonnell and realised he loathes people like me way more than the Tories.
EM: Isn't that an extreme analysis?
AC: We have argued before on this, that Labour has conspired to make what we did in government a negative. [Journalist] Michael White calls it "the Corbyn-Dacre axis". People say shouldn't we have a new political party? I think we've got one, and I don't feel totally at home with it.
EM: I believe in the Labour Party looking outwards, not inwards. I think Jeremy believes that too.
AC: He might. I am not sure about the people around him.
EM: Take Momentum. Lots is said and written and no doubt again not everything they do is right. But if you went to the party conference, they had this project, "The World Transformed" – ideas for the future. These young people were not interested in deselections, but ideas.
AC: Why doesn't he just put this deselection thing to bed then?
EM: That is a matter for him. Listen, I went to Australia in 2015 during the leadership election to get away from it all and ignore your texts [urging him to speak out against Corbyn] and I came back and saw this guy who said he was about to vote for Jeremy. I asked him why and he said, "I couldn't forgive myself if I didn't." What does that say? The 2015 leadership election felt like, "Do we want a more right-wing version of Ed or a more left-wing version of Ed?" – a more radical, bolder version – and that ››

» is what he was offering. That is why he won and that does speak to the moment.
AC: It may speak to the moment, but is he going to win?
EM: I can't guarantee that. It is not in the bag, but it certainly could happen.
AC: It could. But we are up against a government as bad as this, in terms of its abject failure to deal with the big issues, the division, the incompetence, yet we are neck and neck and May is often viewed as better than him.
EM: That is the fog of Brexit. Let me talk to you about my constituency. We were one of the top five or six for Leave, 71, 72 per cent. People haven't changed their minds. That is more or less reflected in the polls. People voted for Brexit, yes about immigration, but also for much deeper reasons. It is like the woman who said to me, "I voted for a new beginning for my grandchildren."
AC: And is Brexit going to deliver it?
EM: I don't think it will.
AC: So should we not…
EM: …Tell them they were wrong?
AC: No, but explain there is a real possibility that what they voted for and what parliament is enacting will make their lives worse, not better.
EM: I just don't think that is going to work. I don't think you can overestimate the extent to which the driver for this referendum was a sense of political alienation, alienation from the political class.
AC: I accept that.
EM: But then the political class comes along and says, "Right, this is the way you voted, nothing has changed in the sense of delivering the change you want, and we are going to come along and say, 'Do it again.'" Let me ask you this: if it had been 52-48 the other way and Nigel Farage was out there saying let's rerun this referendum, what would you be saying?
AC: Guaranteed Farage would be.
EM: Right, and what would you be saying?
AC: That he would have to win the argument because democracy doesn't die on one vote.
EM: You wouldn't say rerun the referendum.
AC: I don't see this as rerunning it.
EM: It is really, though.
AC: I think, as we know more and the reality of Brexit becomes clearer, then the public are entitled to change their mind if they want to.
EM: Remember, I am the guy who stood on a manifesto saying no to having the referendum. I also campaigned full-throatedly for Remain.
AC: What do you think this podcast thing says about what people think they need in the political debate?
EM: Big ideas to make the country better, to make it fairer.
AC: And why is parliament not doing it?
EM: Because of the fog of Brexit. It is actually what Tony warned me would happen, in 2015, when I was wondering what to do on the referendum. He said it would consume every waking minute of what you do. If you are my constituents, maybe you are a leaver thinking, "Get on with it," but they also voted for things to be different and why has that not happened? Why has May not delivered her "on the steps" vision? Because she is caught between free-market conservatism and its failure. That is where we are. Why am I cheerful? Short-term, with Brexit and Trump, bad. But medium-term, it is all up for grabs. When you and I were in the Labour government in the Nineties, we did really good things, but the script of where we were going, we had a sense of it – accept a lot of the economic settlement of the past, big social push. But the script for the

'Hatred can cloud judgement. I don't have personal animus towards David Cameron'

next ten, 15 years is not written. It is so up for grabs. That is what Trump did. People are searching for, "What does the world look like with this inequality, this failure of free markets?" If the Tories are to revive, they'll have to take this much more seriously, go much deeper than David Cameron did.
AC: What do you think about the way Cameron has just vanished? And what sense did you get of him?
EM: Hatred can cloud judgement, so I don't have personal animus. He'll be remembered for Brexit and I fear that what happened with Brexit was because of who he was as a person. He felt he would win. He felt he would persuade people. He had done it in Scotland; he had done it with me. Now, the country is dealing with the consequences.
AC: Do you have any doubts about your own buggering off [resigning as leader]?
EM: Not really.
AC: Or about the changes you made that helped Jeremy become leader and change the party?
EM: Not really. Even the Tories were having the membership elect the leader. Jeremy won in every section. And the £3 people – it was the right of the party saying we have to have these registered supporters to counteract the unions. Also, in a way, if you attribute it to the mechanics, you miss the bigger picture: what was it about his project that spoke to people?
AC: I am not suggesting this is your purpose or mission, but if he did become prime minister, would you be happy to go back into the cabinet?
EM: I think that is for the future. I don't know. I want to contribute in some way, but I am happy with what I am doing. I am in the ideas business, with the full freedom that gives me.
AC: Did you enjoy being leader?
EM: Yeah, but it had its moments.
AC: Were there times you regretted it?
EM: No. It was a huge privilege. That may be a cliché but it is true. I never regretted it. My friend [film director] Paul Greengrass always used to say very few people get the chance to talk to the country about its condition, the challenges, and I had the platform to do that. I took that seriously. Family-wise, it was difficult, more difficult than I realised. You are absent even when you're present.
AC: When you have been reflecting, have you ever wondered had [your brother] David done it could he have done a better job?
EM: Not in the sense I ever think I shouldn't have stood. I was offering something different. You won't love this, but I was the "moving on from New Labour" candidate. Because you'll know from our conversations before 2010 that I did not arrive at this suddenly, for electoral reasons, as it were.
AC: So if Jeremy does win, and he does this agenda, a bit like we would say Neil [Kinnock] played a big role in setting up for Tony to win…
EM: If Jeremy leads a radical government that changes the country then maybe I laid some of the foundations. I am less interested in my place in history than what I can do to make that happen.
AC: If Trump comes on a state visit…
EM: I am on the demo. Definitely.
AC: And you wouldn't go to the state banquet?
EM: No.
AC: Would Jeremy?
EM: That is a matter for him. It's a tricky decision. He would have to meet him. Are you on the demo?
AC: I will be very agitated. I can't even watch him on TV. I read his State Of The Union Address, didn't watch. He is the »

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» president, Brexit is happening, he is there for three or seven years. Is there a danger we send a message not just to Trump but to America and that damages Britain ultimately?

EM: Not at all, because you are sending a message about what's acceptable in a leader in terms of values. Let's say he comes, there are no protests, all fine, it sends a message that he is popular around the world. He says he is popular in Britain already. Er, no, you're not. And what is objectionable about him? His racism. His misogyny. His peculiar relationship with Russia and most of all with the truth. There is a line.

AC: If you were the leader, would you go?

EM: I don't know.

AC: We had state visits for some rum leaders.

EM: Our relationship with America is so important and the response to America we project has an impact there. I don't think you can say, "Oh, the Chinese came here, why are there demos for Trump?" Because we know the Chinese have different values. We are not joined at the hip historically the way we are with the Americans. He will want to say it is a great success.

AC: What does it say about the US that they elected him?

EM: It is similar to Brexit. Read about the Midwest, where he won. It was economic. No doubt there is racism among some people. But two days before the election, his last big ad was taken as being anti-Semitic because he attacked three Jews, but it was his message that the global elite have taken your jobs, closed the factories and it's time to take back the country. This has been coming for a long time. The same kind of discontent that drove Brexit drove Trump.

AC: I argued with Tony about this, but how much do you fear there is something in Trump that means the comparisons with the Thirties are not far-fetched?

EM: What he is doing day by day, on [special counsel] Mueller, someone tweeted about it becoming a banana republic pretty quickly. It is pretty scary – it is what Nixon did, but more skilfully.

AC: Has he got fascist tendencies?

EM: I think he has very scary authoritarian tendencies, definitely – by any means necessary. I think he is pretty scary. But not popular, either. There is all kinds of bullshit about that but he has low approval ratings.

AC: You have been very high-profile for a long time, now you are doing a podcast and tweeting a bit and people think you are a different person.

EM: What is the reason? Two things. The constraints of the job. You can't say, "Donald Trump is a moron." Even Jeremy hasn't. But also, the self-imposed constraints. I probably was too cautious. If you are Labour leader, you feel you are operating in a political war zone. There are people in the media trying to kill you every day. They wake up in the morning, that is their job – they are told by Rupert Murdoch. He told them they were not tough enough. So you parse every word, [don't swear or] it becomes, "Ed Miliband in foul-mouthed rant." I didn't feel I was trapped, but maybe it is what comes across. It is hard to see yourself as others see you.

AC: I was talking to the audience coming out of your recording and they said you were natural; when you were leader they said you were weird.

EM: What do you think it is down to?

AC: The extent of the scrutiny. Maybe it subconsciously makes you change and you get defensive when people are looking for something non-defensive. Macron, we haven't talked about him. He is the other political phenomenon at the moment.

'I am less interested in my place in history than what I can do to make it happen'

EM: He has the sort of "change", "outsider" thing that a Corbyn or Trump or Brexit has. A political outsider. There is a crisis for social democratic parties. The French got six per cent. The Dutch got six. It is partly about whether you are the managers of globalisation to make it nicer or whether you can offer something different.

AC: Is Jeremy bright?

EM: Yeah. What are you getting at?

AC: I want my leaders to be very bright, intellectually.

EM: Principled, integrity, someone who is on to the important issues.

AC: You are going for new ideas. He seems to pride himself on not changing his mind. Is there a lack of basic curiosity?

EM: Oh, come on. He is leader of the Labour Party. You know what that is like.

AC: He is very good at dealing with the stuff, amazingly calm, it all bounces off him, that is a real quality. But how you explore the world and come up with ideas – there is no curiosity.

EM: I'm not sure that's fair. People do leadership in different ways. What he is offering is principle and integrity, and that is really important.

AC: The other interesting thing is what sticks. What does it say about our world that the wretched bacon sandwich stuck?

EM: An image speaks a million words.

AC: But why did that one speak so many million words?

EM: What do you think?

AC: The other night when it was mentioned, every single person...

EM: ...Laughed.

AC: And knew about it and remembered it and won't remember your speeches about inequality.

EM: I don't think that is why I lost.

AC: No, any more than the Sheffield rally lost Neil the election. But it is weird what sticks.

EM: Built up by the media – particularly funny picture. Three months after the election if you had raised it I would have felt pained, but now... [*shrugs*].

AC: I enjoyed your funny story [on the podcast] about me sending you the wrong text.

EM: I got that wrong. Rory [Alastair's son] sent you a text about my wedding suit saying, "Why does Ed look like a reformed football hooligan?" and you said, "Maybe he has a tattoo on his arse." It was meant for him but you sent it to me. I'm in the car with Justine, meant to be the happiest day of my life, and I tell her maybe Alastair Campbell's phone has been hacked. I then send you a message saying, "Have you been hacked?" You fessed up. It was nicer than some of the texts you sent me during the leadership election.

AC: Good to talk to you. I wish Jeremy had, though.

EM: I can understand why he didn't. He'd have worried you would really go for him.

AC: But he could say what he likes.

EM: If George Galloway had asked to interview Tony back in 1994, what would you have said?

AC: George Galloway? Is that how they see me?

EM: OK, a bad comparison perhaps, but you get my point. GQ

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THE GQ DROP

EDITED BY **Bill Prince**

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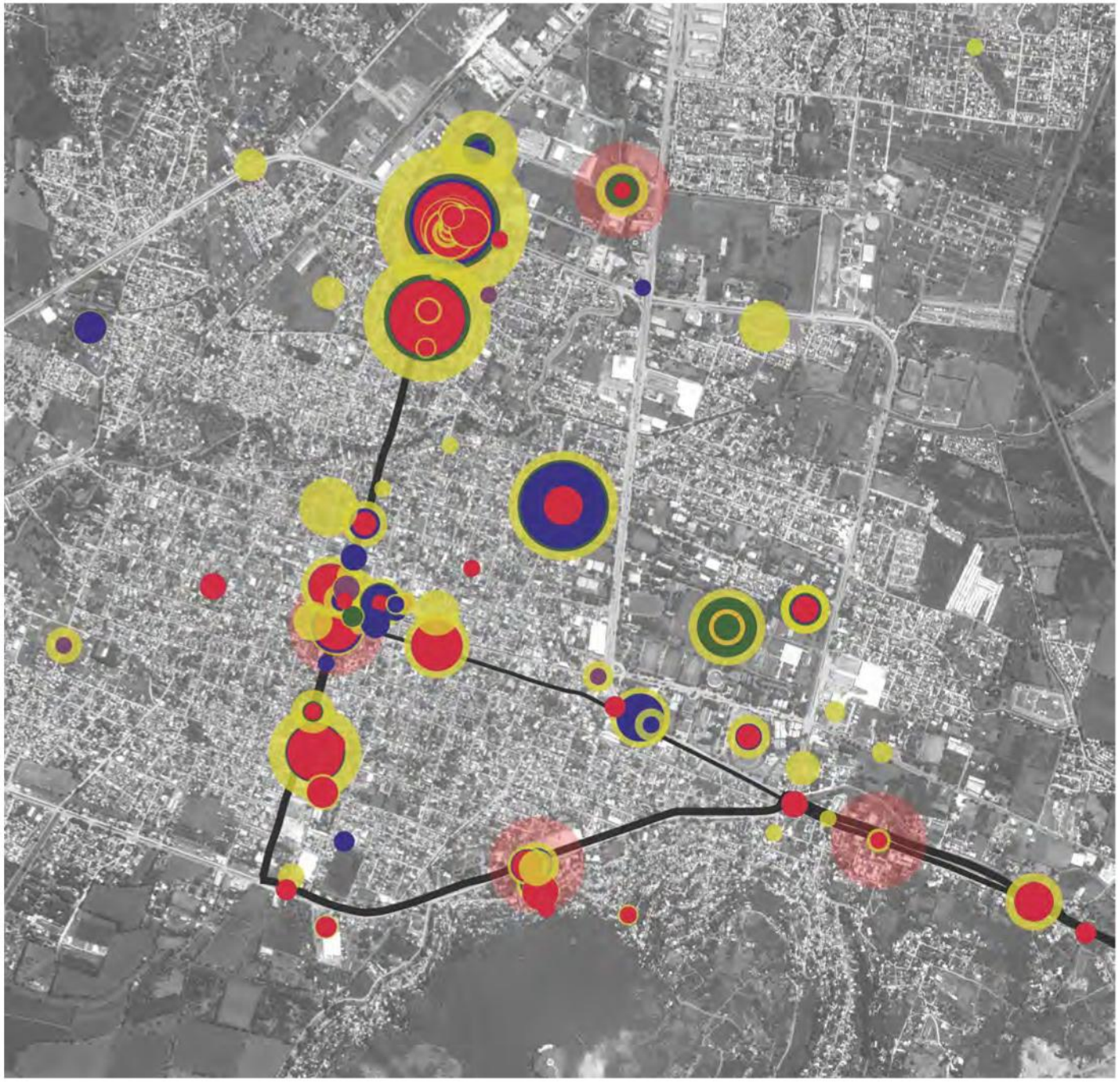


Photograph **Forensic Architecture**

The Ayotzinapa Platform On 26 September 2014, 43 students from a teachers' college in Iguala, Mexico, were "disappeared" by local police. This interactive map, designed by nonprofit activists Forensic Architecture, plots witness accounts of the attack and constructs what they describe as a "cartography of violence".

Coming to a headset near you...

Thanks to VR – and a growing archive of live performances – you'll never see your favourite band in the same way again

STORY BY **Dorian Lynskey**

I'm on stage with Kiss. I know that I'm actually in an open-plan office in London, wearing a virtual reality headset, but nonetheless, part of me is fully convinced that I'm on stage with Kiss. I can choose to "stand" in several different positions: on the drum riser; in the crowd; squarely in Gene Simmons' eye line. I feel so present that my first instinct is to apologise for getting in the way. As I remove the headset, I'm left exhilarated by seeing a concert in an entirely new way. I don't even like Kiss.

This is the work of Melody VR, a startup that aspires to be the main destination for music-related virtual reality and plans to launch its app in 2018. Last year, it secured investment from three major record labels. Nobody in the music industry knows where VR will take them, but everybody's interested in finding out. "If you're a believer in technology it's a bit of a no-brainer," says Anthony Matchett, Melody VR's 29-year-old CEO. "It's not a challenge to get involved."

When Melody VR began courting artists, managers and labels four years ago, sceptics mentioned 3-D TVs, an expensive novelty for gearheads rather than a mass-market technology. That was, after all, VR's history. In 1991, *Computer Gaming World* predicted "affordable VR by 1994". Instead, Nintendo and Sega lost a fortune, several startups went bust and VR was dismissed as a costly fad. For years it occupied a developmental limbo. Everyone thought it would happen eventually but few were willing to invest enough time and money to make it so.

So when, in 2010, Californian teenager Palmer Luckey designed the first prototype of the Oculus Rift headset, it was not a crowded field. It took Facebook's £2.1 billion purchase of Oculus VR in 2014 for the likes of Google, Samsung and Sony to pay attention. "A few years ago VR was perceived as a punchline," says Blake J Harris, author of *The History Of The Future*, an imminent book about VR's second coming. "Oculus resurrected it from this terrible perception of failure."

Oculus' chief technology officer is John Carmack, a game programmer who believes that developing VR is a "moral imperative". In his idealistic vision, it's a way for everyone to experience anything, whatever their circumstances. When Matchett first saw an early version of Oculus Rift in 2013, he realised it had huge potential for the music industry. Vast numbers of fans miss out on gigs due to location, budget, health or just because tickets sell out in minutes. What if they could "attend" those shows in VR? "We wanted to make people feel present," says Matchett. "It's the next best thing to actually being there. It's teleportation and time travel."

Matchett, a former recording engineer, and his partner Steve Hancock, a concert promoter, founded Melody VR in 2013. For the past three years, they have been building an archive of concerts that now includes more than 600 artists, from David Guetta to The Who to the London Symphony Orchestra and dozens of festivals. The company plans to sell archived shows as if they were albums and offer live-streamed concerts for a percentage of the ticket price. It's been a steep learning curve. Melody VR had to design hi-res cameras small enough to film concerts from multiple angles without distracting the performers. During their first outing, filming EDM artist Kaskade at a club in Las Vegas, the cameras melted in the intense heat. "It's taken us a while to perfect what we do," says Matchett. "We worked with Kaskade again on New Year's Eve and I think he's impressed by how far we've come."

As well as inserting you into spaces that are real but otherwise inaccessible, Melody VR designs environments that don't exist. I don the headset again to enter a virtual realm that they crafted in collaboration with the postmodern pop star Poppy. I find myself in a huge white room in front of an array of items. I pick up a ray gun and fire off a few zaps. I peer down a kaleidoscope. I play a melody on a xylophone and a miniature Poppy materialises to ask me to play it again. The experience is as playful and unsettlingly dreamlike as Poppy herself. "When an artist

says, 'What's possible?'" explains Matchett, "we say, 'Anything's possible. What do you want to create?'" It would be more accurate to say that anything's possible in embryo. Melody VR films concerts in pristine 8K resolution but the hardware is yet to catch up. The VR videos in Björk's audacious 2016 exhibition, *Björk Digital*, were physically exhilarating but visually primitive, with graphics that were low-res and often blurry.

Still, the direction of travel is thrilling and more artists are experimenting with VR videos including Avicii, Biffy Clyro and LCD Soundsystem. The most successful to date is Gorillaz's "Saturnz Barz (Spirit House)", last year's ambitious collaboration with Google Spotlight Stories and Passion Pictures using 360-degree video, a kind of phone-friendly VR-lite launched in 2015. It took more than 80 people 12 weeks to create.

"VR's an exciting new frontier and there's a lot of experimentation going on," says David Mogendorff, artist relations manager at YouTube and Google Play Music. "An immersive experience gives a much stronger emotional connection to a song and an artist than a 2-D video. As the technology becomes more accessible we'll see more innovation. It does feel like we're still at the beginning."

The beginning of what exactly? I leave Melody VR's office intoxicated by the possibilities. In a world where a headset is as common as a games console, everything changes. VR live-streaming would transform the economics of live music. VR videos could be as big a creative revolution as music videos in the Eighties. We would surely see the arrival of the VR album: an immersive equivalent of Beyoncé's *Lemonade*. No wonder the industry feels that VR is worth a punt.

No one knows when this will happen. VR's greatest asset is also its biggest handicap: it's a radically new experience. Listening to a song on Spotify feels much the same as playing a download or CD, so the transition is easy, but VR requires a major behavioural shift. Even with the arrival of affordable standalone headsets such as the new Oculus Go, the industry expects VR to go mainstream gradually rather than exploding like the smartphone. It's playing a long game.

"I think VR is in a more fragile place than most people like to admit," says Harris. "The goal of these companies is to bend perception towards 'this is the next big thing' because if they don't, then it won't happen. You have to create this self-fulfilling hype." Is there a chance it won't happen? "I think that 50 years from now VR will be a huge part of everyday life. It's just a matter of how that happens."

Photograph Arthur Belebeau; Getty Images

Literature

Make Hay not war

With outposts all over the world – from Aarhus to Arequipa – the Welsh literary festival continues its mission of cultural diplomacy

STORY BY **Toby Lichtig**

Think of Hay, the world's greatest literary festival, and you're unlikely to summon images of arid plateaus, cobalt skies and slumbering volcanoes. Hay is wet and Welsh and has a sheep market and lots of little bookshops. It boasts cosiness in spades but lacks geological grandeur and tectonic pizzazz. Which is fine for a literary festival. Except that isn't the full picture.

The event in the Brecon Beacons is only one iteration of a year-round gala and globe-spanning brand. To a Spaniard, Hay will mean Segovia; to a Colombian, Cartagena; to a Dane, Aarhus. There are currently seven strands of Hay, all masterminded by the same small team in Britain. Hay Wales may remain the biggest draw, attracting a wide range of literary *galácticos*, but these satellite occasions are burnishing the festival's reputation.

Take the Hay Festival in Arequipa, Peru's second city, in the western Andes: a four-day carnival of high debate and Pisco sours set around the cobbled streets of the baroque old town – all pinkish-white volcanic stone, grand colonnades and ecclesiastical *braggadocio*. There's a pleasant campus feel to the affair. The events take place in venues within a five-minute walk of one another.

The programme is typically eclectic. Last year's event attracted authors Teju Cole, Geoff Dyer, Cees Nooteboom and Maylis de Kerangal; the climate scientist Gabrielle Walker, anthropologist Wade Davis and archaeologist Jago Cooper. The talks are in simultaneous translation. There is, unsurprisingly, a strong Hispanic contingent, representing both Spain and Latin America. And people turn up. The halls are packed, the audiences skew young and as with all Hay events, tickets are free for students.

Arequipa is a university town with a rich literary heritage – most notably as the birthplace of the Nobel Prize-winner Mario Vargas Llosa (it houses a wonderful library bearing his name). It was Vargas Llosa who first persuaded Hay's founder and director Peter Florence to bring his festival here three years ago. The Peruvian cultural ministry, along with private sponsors, was happy to lend support – a formula Florence knows well.

"There's always a tension between the licence to operate and the ability to fund what we're doing and what public money means," he tells me over breakfast at his hotel. Hay Arequipa has so far been relatively untroubled – other festivals have been more fraught. Hay Dhaka (2011-2015) was short-lived. There were threats of violence to the speakers and concerns over freedom of expression. Hay Budapest, begun in 2012, was going well until a government apparatchik suggested, as a funding incentive, the removal of Jews and homosexuals from the programme. The same year, Hay Xalapa in Mexico took place against the backdrop of murdered journalists and cartel warfare. The governor who invited Florence to host it is currently on trial for corruption.

As with all of last year's Hay events, the theme for Arequipa was "reformations" – in commemoration of the half-millennium since Martin Luther took up flyposting in Wittenberg. Environmental perspectives featured strongly. In 2018, for obvious reasons, it's "armistice". Confirmed speakers for Wales include Margaret Atwood, Philip Pullman and Marina Warner, who will consider the theme in the context of dystopias and resistance to them. "Armistice" will be particularly resonant at the forthcoming festivals in Mexico and Colombia, the former still locked in a state of narco war, the latter slowly emerging from a half-century of internecine conflict.

"It's not just about peace treaty," says Florence. "It's much closer to the idea of the way of living in settlement and peace."

Hay is more than a literary festival. It's beginning to resemble something closer to cultural diplomacy. The stunning locations are certainly a plus, but what's most exciting is its ability to bring together a range of disciplines and voices, to transmit a slice of collegiate experience to different populations around the world.

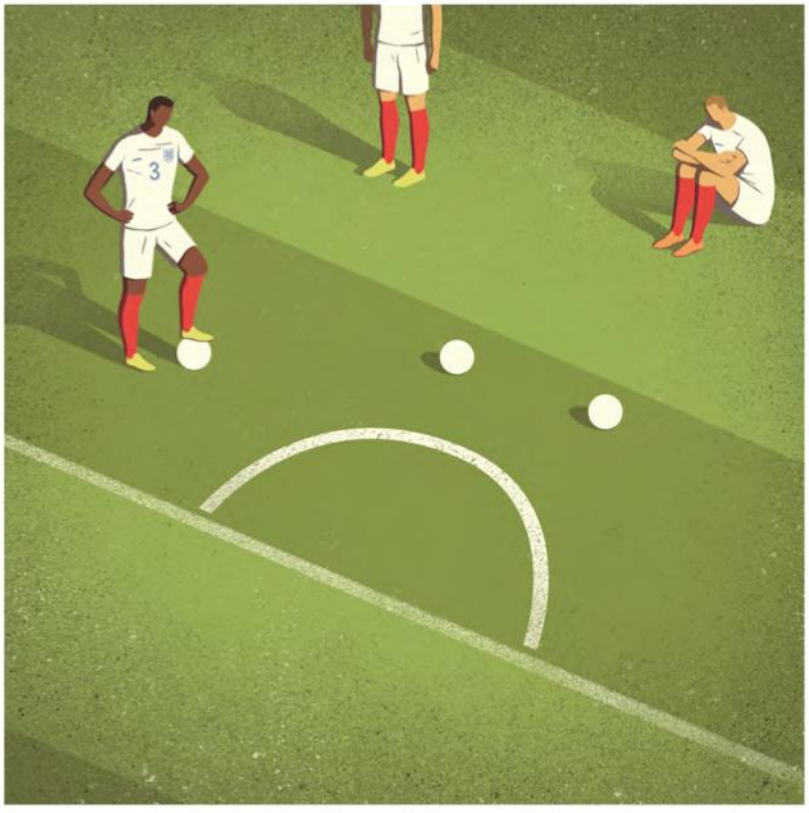
Hay Festival Wales runs from 24 May to 3 June. hayfestival.com

Sport

They think it's all over

Thanks to the FA's policy of low morale and zero expectation, England have lost the World Cup before it's even begun

STORY BY **Martin Samuel** ILLUSTRATION BY **Davide Bonazzi**



How proud the staff at the Football Association must have been when the news came through from Zurich. In the week England qualified for the 2018 World Cup, Fifa announced the nation had dropped out of its top ten list of applicants for tickets. It has taken a few years but finally the FA has the national team just where it wants it: unloved, unsupported, close to irrelevant. It has managed expectations to the point where anticipation and optimism are all but absent. Few will care, fewer will go and a country that once filled foreign stadiums with flags and fervour now greets the greatest international competition with little more than a shrug.

Travel costs and concerns over Russian hooligans are partly to blame, but it is not as if Brazil was cheap or without challenges in 2014 and thousands of England supporters made it there. Famously, in Belo Horizonte they sang themselves hoarse serenading a dead rubber 0-0 draw with Costa Rica – England having already been guaranteed early exit by losing to Uruguay five days before.

No, the primary reason English visitors are being estimated at 1/50th of the number that went to France in 2016 is the FA's desire to dampen any talk of success. Too much pressure, you see. The players can't handle it. Since the debacle in South Africa in 2010, when England arrived on the back of an outstanding qualifying campaign, only to draw with the United States and Algeria before leaking four to Germany, it has been the FA's aim to prick any signs of overconfidence. Or any confidence for that matter.

And very successful they have been too. Indeed, it might be argued that shutting the curtains on the tiniest rays of sunshine has been the one area in which the senior team has excelled of late. Gareth Southgate, the manager, cannot see a microphone without grabbing it to tell the world how inferior his team are. On the brink of comfortable qualification, he chose the week before a home game against Slovenia to announce that some of his players did not even deserve to be in the squad. He regularly compares his group unfavourably with Spain or Germany and frequently gives the impression that anyone approaching Russia with even a trace of positivity is deluded. Incredibly, Southgate is lauded for his realism – as if in the past two tournaments talking down England's chances had a constructive impact.

In case you hadn't noticed, it's getting worse. England's 2014 campaign was the poorest at any World Cup finals in 56 years. In 2016, they were knocked out of the European Championship by Iceland. Maybe it's time to stop managing. Maybe it's time to live a little.

Eddie Jones came into English rugby at a low point too. Stuart Lancaster had just overseen the poorest showing by any World Cup hosts in history and morale was on the floor. Did Jones encourage further wallowing? No, he began building English spirit again. He started instilling a winning mentality, because it is important for a team to think it will win. Incredibly, the FA encouraged Southgate to spend time with Jones, even though his attitude is the antithesis of its policy.

"The mantras, the messaging, it's almost like everyone is saying we're going to fail," Jones said of the English squad. "It doesn't matter if we qualify, we're gonna fail, so who really cares? And players hear that, their mother, father hears it, their girlfriend hears it. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy."

He's right, of course. England have no reason to feel superior, but confidence is not the same as arrogance. In recent tournaments, England have played as if burdened, as if this is an inevitable spiral of decline; they play as if sport never delivers shocks, as if the favourite always triumphs, as if Leicester's Premier League title was not won. A World Cup is meant to be a merry release for the nation. See how well we can do, see how far we get. Where is the fun in travelling so dourly, without hope or expectation?

As it stands, fans in Colombia, Egypt and Mexico are more up for this World Cup than the English. So are China, Israel and the United States – and they aren't even there. The FA has managed expectations into the turf. It does not matter if disappointment lies ahead; it's time to start looking up.

Architecture

Space invaders

An innovative architectural practice is using media, memory and 3-D modelling to reconstruct acts of violence. In doing so, it is turning the tables on aggressors – and creating something close to art

STORY BY **Edwin Heathcote**

Imagine an unremarkable room reconstructed in a warehouse, a full-scale model of a normal domestic interior. It has a hole in the ceiling, beneath which a long tube of bright light is suspended in midair. The white-painted walls are pocked with a scatter of black marks, except for a couple of lumpy outlines that look a little like abstract figures. A complex cat's cradle of thin threads spreads from the centre of the room, each connecting with a mark on the walls.

It is an eerily beautiful and mysterious thing, an installation at Venice Architecture Biennale. But it is also a meticulous reconstruction of the effect of a lethal CIA drone strike in Pakistan. And those two figures that appear on the wall are the outlines of the two people present in the room when the bomb exploded – the reason the walls are clean is that their bodies absorbed the shrapnel and fragments.

The reconstruction is the work of Forensic Architecture, an agency based at Goldsmiths college in London. It's also a precursor to a new show at the Institute Of Contemporary Arts about one of the most intriguing architecture practices currently at work. While most architects work outwards from a sketch or a digital drawing to construct a physical building, Forensic Architecture works backwards, often from ruins and rubble, painstakingly piecing back together not only the fabric but also the narrative, the moments before and during an explosive act of violence and destruction. The reconstructions and the physical evidence can then be used in court to highlight war crimes or illegality, putting the pressure back on the aggressors.

Founded by Israeli architect Eyal Weizman in 2011, Forensic Architecture is a nonprofit grouping of architects, filmmakers, coders, artists and investigative journalists – all the expertise needed to reconstruct a 3-D picture of the critical moments through the now ubiquitous media of shaky mobile-phone footage, CCTV, satellite photography and the physical scars left on the structure and the remains. This is their big innovation – that architecture is itself a recording medium.

"All war is now urban," Weizman tells *GQ*, "and buildings bear the marks of its violence. This is an archaeology of the present." The architect has a succinct summary of the processes they use: matter, media and memory. The matter is the ruins or the re-created space "which architects are best able to reconstruct as they're used to working with 3-D models and imagining space". Media is now almost everything: there are virtually no events within human reach that are not mediated or recorded in some way. Memory, or direct witness testimony, is, ironically, perhaps the least reliable: these inevitably traumatic moments and memories may be blurred or distorted. When they were called upon to attempt to reconstruct the Saydnaya prison in Syria, Forensic Architecture had to build a picture of a structure that had never been photographed using descriptions from former inmates who had been kept virtually entirely in the dark and often in subterranean solitary confinement. Kept in silence and forced to cover their eyes when moving around, the prisoners became attuned to even the subtlest of sounds, living in a world defined by aural sensation and relaying what Weizman calls "ear-witness testimony". The model is now being used by Amnesty International to put pressure on Syria to abandon these brutal programmes of torture.

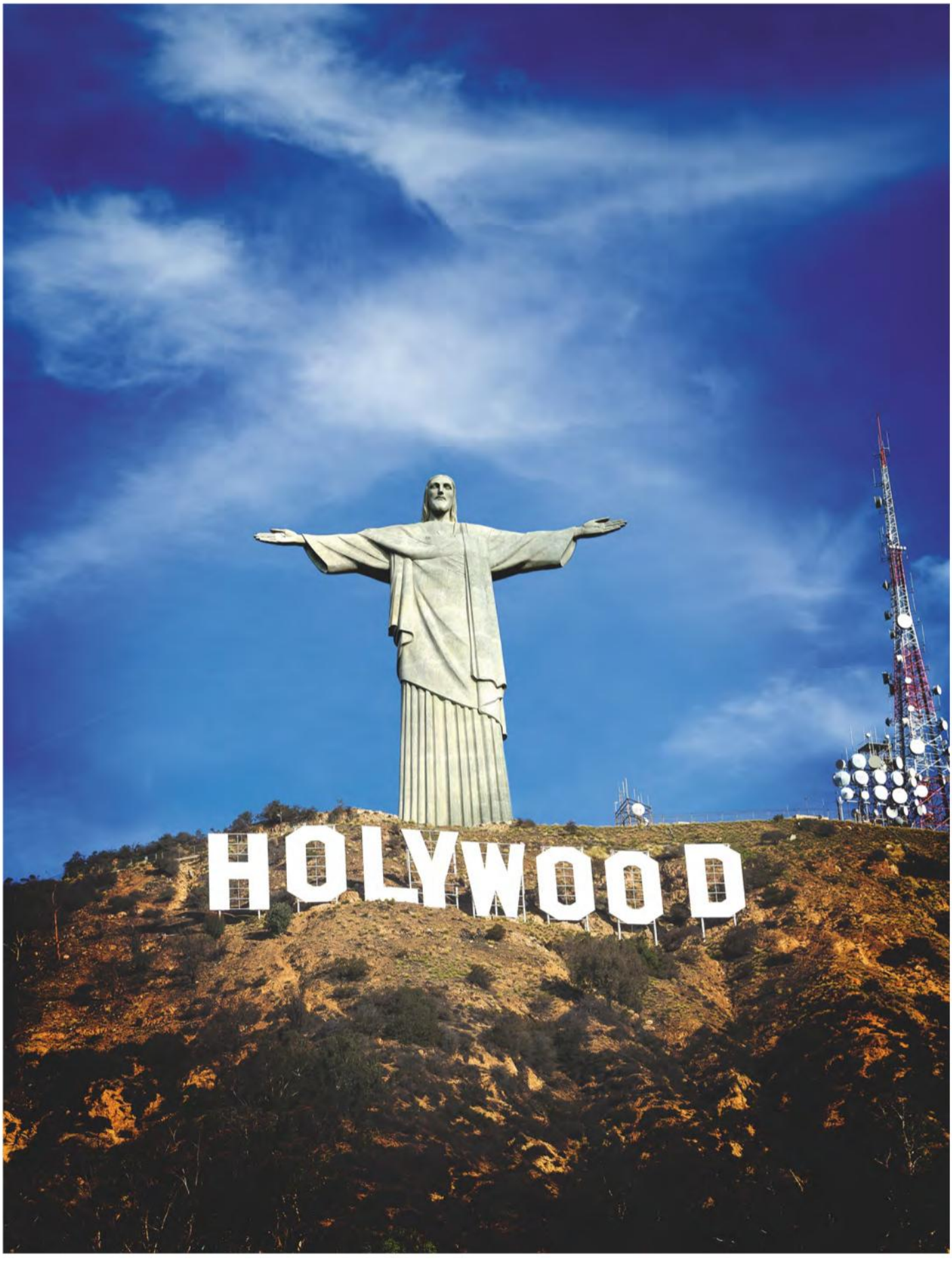
Photograph **Forensic Architecture**

The Architecture Of Hellfire Romeo re-creates the impact of a drone strike on a target in Miranshah, Pakistan

Weizman refers to this work as "counter-forensics". "Forensics is a state tool," he writes, "counter-forensics, as we practise it, is a civil practice that aims to interrogate the built environment to uncover political violence undertaken by states." The range of the work is eye-opening, from determining the sequence of events in the shooting of a driver by Israeli police in the Negev (which proved his innocence and a conspiracy to cover up the murder) to the analysis of bomb clouds to determine which kinds of ordnance have been used – one such analysis led the Israeli Defence Forces to admit they had used white phosphorus on civilian populations. But there were also investigations into extrajudicial killings and deaths by drowning of refugees in the Mediterranean, caused inadvertently, and tragically, by rescue attempts. This is a new practice of architecture, turning the profession on its head and merging it with the burning sense of mission in investigative journalism. When the *New York Times* wanted to analyse the Las Vegas mass shooting last year, it turned to Weizman's methods, setting up its own forensic unit.

What is critical here, in an age of fake news and counterfactuals, is that this process produces evidence, both incontrovertible and invaluable. It brings architecture into the digital age, melding it with media and detective work. It has transformed the discipline from an instrument of power into a vehicle for justice for those whom it has so often dispossessed.

Counter Investigations: Forensic Architecture is on at the Institute Of Contemporary Arts until 6 May. ica.art



Photograph **Getty Images**

Low-budget, evangelising films – such as those made by Christian studio Pure Flix – are manna from heaven for Hollywood's bottom line

Film

Born-again blockbusters

For years, faith-based indie studios have been making serious box office bankers on miraculously humble budgets. Now, the majors, too, have seen the light

STORY BY **Stuart McGurk**

Hollywood has a lot to repent. There's Adam Sandler for starters; then Jack Black; every *Fast And The Furious* film; every movie where Johnny Depp tries to get his eyebrows a best supporting actor nomination; any film that contains Gerard Butler; Gerard Butler; and Michael Bay.

There are those, of course, who are going straight to hell: Harvey Weinstein; Woody Allen; anyone involved in *The English Patient*.

And then there are those merely going to purgatory – Terrence Malick; Peter Jackson; Lars von Trier – mainly so they can finally understand what watching one of their films is like.

And sure, maybe Tom Hanks is getting out of this alive – or, rather, dead – but mostly, of course, Hollywood is not going to heaven.

After all, look at the films. Fornicators! Drug users! Violent men and women wearing… inappropriate costumes. And Andy Serkis must be guilty of coveting something.

So what is Hollywood to do? Well, what Hollywood always does: realise there is money to be made from God-fearing films for God-fearing folk.

Just this month, three such examples are set to hit UK cinema screens: *Paul, Apostle Of Christ*, about Jesus' most influential apostle; *Samson*, about the Bible's most notorious tale of insecurity; and the third in the *God's Not Dead* series, which, well, you really need to have seen *God's Not Dead* one and two, but – spoilers – God is not, thus far, dead.

The latter represent an explosion in Christian-honed cinema from production companies which produce nothing else.

After Mel Gibson's *The Passion Of The Christ* shocked the industry in 2004 by turning in a box office sum of $600 million from a film made with no real stars (well, Jim Caviezel) and on a budget of just $30m, the Pure Flix studio, founded the year after, realised it could make Christian films on even less money, have zero stars and it would still be praying all the way to the bank.

Over the past decade, it has become a genuine Hollywood power player and has released more than 20 films to date.

Pure Flix films such as *Do You Believe?* – a series of interlocking vignettes about people and their faith – raked in $14.4m from a $2.3m budget, while the first *God's Not Dead* film – about a college debate between a student and his professor concerning God's existence (think *Miracle On 34th Street* but with more miracles) – was the highest-grossing independent film of 2014, taking, from a $2m budget, a whopping $65m. Last year's *The Case For Christ*, meanwhile, based on a nonfiction book in which an investigative journalist decides Jesus was real after all, made $18m from an estimated $3m.

In our current cinematic conga line, where most films are either sequels, remakes, reimaginings or reboots, you could argue that at least these films are individual projects, crafted with care and done with love. But that would suggest you have not watched the films.

Take your pick from the critical notices for *God's Not Dead* ("Ham-fisted melodrama" – *Variety*; "Outright hateful" – the *Guardian*), *Do You Believe?* ("A deranged melodrama where any sense of soapy, campy fun is undercut by the preachy, self-serious tone" – The AV Club) or *The Case For Christ* ("Profoundly silly Christian recruitment propaganda" – the *Times*; "Drags on for what feels like an eternity" – the *Guardian*; "Surprisingly watchable" – the *Express*).

The problem, as every review points out, is that these are not merely films with Christian values, or based on Bible tales, but cinematic sermons asking you to change your ways.

But even if the clumsiest superhero films have nothing on these films' one-note villains (or, as they're known in this case, "atheists"), oddly, the God genre has more in common with binary superhero blockbusters than you'd imagine.

Take the Christian film series *Love Comes Softly*, for instance, based on the life of a frontier family, which had no fewer than two prequels (*Love Begins*, *Love's Everlasting Courage*) and eight sequels (*Love's Enduring Promise*, *Love's Long Journey*, *Love's Abiding Joy*, *Love's Unending Legacy*, *Love's Unfolding Dream*, *Love Takes Wing*, *Love Finds A Home* and… you get the idea) in just eight years. It's like *The Fast And The Furious*… but for love.

The *God's Not Dead* series has even borrowed another more recent blockbuster trope: *God's Not Dead 2* has a post-credits sequence, in the style of Marvel and DC superhero films, which lays the groundwork for its latest instalment, *God's Not Dead: A Light In Darkness*.

And so, of course, it wasn't long before the big boys realised there was money to be made. Step forward Sony and its Affirm Films offshoot, which launched in 2007, two years after Pure Flix. Its films are infinitely slicker, often just as terrible and even more profitable.

War Room, released in 2015, is a film about a family literally praying away domestic abuse in a room together ("One can always keep praying that the next of these films will be a little better" – the *Guardian*), yet made $74m from a $3m budget. And 2016's *Miracles From Heaven* – the *Titanic* of faith films, having been made for a God-bothering $13m, most of which you'd imagine was spent on casting Jennifer Garner – took $74m. It was about a sick daughter… who got better.

Sony's Affirm Films' release of *Paul, Apostle Of Christ* this month – rivalling Pure Flix's *God's Not Dead* and *Samson* – brings Hollywood full circle. Its star? None other than Jim Caviezel – Jesus in Gibson's *The Passion Of The Christ*, which performed a miracle for the industry, and now, for *Paul, Apostle Of Christ*, Saint Luke – as the industry says hallelujah. Meanwhile, just last month Caviezel announced Mel Gibson would make a sequel to *The Passion Of The Christ*, rather predictably (given the ending of the first) titled *The Passion Of The Christ: Resurrection*, in which he'd star.

"I'll tell you this," said Caviezel, "the film he's going to do is going to be the biggest film in history."

Samson is out now; Paul, Apostle Of Christ and God's Not Dead: A Light In Darkness are out on 30 March.

Relationships

#MeToo is not the end of sex

In the headlines and hashtags, a picture emerged of all men as inveterate abusers. But for those of us who never forgot how to behave, the line between flirtation and harassment is still clear as day

STORY BY **Tony Parsons** ILLUSTRATION BY **Lee Healey**

Courting was simple.

Two pairs of eyes met across a darkened club – or a brightly lit open-plan office – body language would be read, the laws of attraction assessed, opening gambits exchanged and the great game would begin. But now the clubs are dying, the dance floors are emptying and a clumsy come-on in the office – which might have once been casually rebuffed, with no hard feelings on either side – could now result in accusations of sexual harassment and the end of your glorious career. It feels like no new day dawns without some big shot being exposed as a sexual bully. The alleged crimes cover a very large waterfront, from the worst kind of sexual assault to ham-fisted passes to crass text messages. But in the post-Weinstein world, men are asking, are we still allowed to chat someone up?

It is suggested that we are now in the middle of a sexual counter-revolution, a rolling back of the sexual liberation of the past 50 years. The theory runs that the recent series of sex scandals has created a climate of neopuritanism where any expression of sexual interest is horribly suspect. But – this just in – the outing of sexual predators does not mean the death of sex.

Yes, there is a reassessment of the way men treat women, especially in the working world, and it is long overdue. But the moral imperative remains: woman needs man and man must have his mate. The human race is not going to die out because a bunch of big swinging dicks have behaved like pigs. Yes, there's a rethinking of sexual etiquette, but you're still allowed to get off with someone you fancy. What has changed is the way you court them.

My friend found his girlfriend on a dating app. And I do not mean that he discovered his true love while trawling Tinder, Guardian Soulmates or eHarmony, swiping right for the curve of a face, the gleam of a smile and the light in the eye that caught his fancy. No, no, no. I mean my friend found his girlfriend's profile on a dating app. Which is not quite on a par with coming home and finding your partner in bed with the milkman, but is perhaps the modern equivalent in the ever-changing world of courting.

Who would have guessed that dating agencies would lose their naff factor? The first marriage agency was run by clergymen and introduced in England and Wales in the late 18th century. But for the first time in three centuries, matchmakers are no longer the refuge of total losers. Indeed, the latest development in dating apps are the exclusive, first-class services for lonely CEOs, love-starved models and celebrities who have no one to cuddle on Saturday night – the likes of Tinder Select, Raya, The League and Mensa Match.

But the notion that you are going to meet a supermodel on a dating app who dreams of settling down is possibly overoptimistic. You are doing well if you meet someone who vaguely resembles their profile picture. Prince Harry did not meet Meghan Markle online – they were introduced by a mutual friend, which is about as old school as courting ever gets. Harry and Markle, all set for the wedding of 2018, are living proof that there is nothing wrong with old-fashioned courtship. Great romance will never be born on a dating app or from 280 characters or fewer.

But courting is seductively easy online.

The Instagram crush, the Twitter tease, the tongue-lolling follow on Facebook. Melanie Sykes met her last husband on Twitter. Melanie Sykes. Online courting creates a restless heart – the illusion that "the one" is just a swipe away. But the smiling faces you size up feel exactly the same way. There are so many fish in the digital sea and all of them are slippery. Fifteen minutes on a dating app can make any man feel like Hugh Hefner in the Playboy Mansion at the start of a weekend – spoilt for sexual choice. It's a good feeling. But technology provides as many ways to lose love as it does to find it.

In the brave new world of courting there are men and women who maintain two smartphones – one for the real world and one for extracurricular activities, for courting that bit on the side. And relationships collapse every day because someone reads a text, an email, a direct message or a WhatsApp missive that was never meant for their eyes. When it comes to infidelity, no smartphone is ever quite smart enough. So many courtships collapse and relationships flounder on the great flapping cakehole of the flirty text, the steamy email, the WhatsApp sweet nothing that was meant to be for someone else's eyes only. But when courting, in the open or on the quiet, never write anything on a hand-held device that you would not want the world to see tattooed on your butt.

Even more dangerous than smartphones, which seem designed to whisper words of love, are pills that promote blood flow to your throbbing manhood. When courting, handle with extreme care performance-enhancing drugs like Viagra and Cialis. At the start of Judd Apatow's *This Is 40*, a man and woman are having hot sex in the shower until the man blurts, "I'm so glad I took that Viagra!"

The woman predictably objects – she wants the man to desire her and not be fuelled by "chemsex". But the man is bewildered. "This is me," he insists. "But turbocharged." And here is the great problem with chemsex. Yes, there are pills that will make you much harder for much longer and this is true if you are 40, 20 or 60. If you are reentering the courting whirl after a period of absence, it is tempting to reach for them. You will be, as the man says, turbocharged. But when you have courted with chemsex it is hard to go back. When she has courted Superman, will she want Clark Kent? And will you want to play the role of bespectacled mortal?

The reason chemsex is popular among very young men is that they believe their sexual performance should resemble that of a porn star. Pornography changed courting. One click and your fantasy is fulfilled, on-tap 24/7. Many marriage counsellors assert that porn now ends more relationships than infidelity. And porn can kill any courtship. If you use porn as a mild stimulant – half a bottle of Sauvignon Blanc, a splash of moonlight – then you will have the best of it. If you treat porn like your favourite mistress – the kind of mistress that gives you the sex of your life – then it will destroy any courtship and any chance of human happiness.

When toiling in the foothills of courtship, you must accept that you will strike out more than you ever succeed. But when you are rejected, when the woman is not interested, then read the signs early and react accordingly. Every sex scandal you can think of happened because the sexual aggressor blithely ignored the signals that were being sent. When David Bowie was once rebuffed by a fellow rock star's wife at the peak of his skinny-assed promiscuity, he said, "You can't blame a bloke for trying."

This always struck me as the most geezerish, blokeish, un-Bowie-like sentence imaginable. But exactly the right thing to say under the circumstances. You know when a woman does not want you to touch her. Always, there must be consent and there has to be parity of status and she has to fancy you. It should have *always* been like that – and it wasn't. But the age of CEOs asking the new intern to play "hunt the stapler" are gone and good riddance to them.

It is no longer acceptable for men of power to use their position to further sexual opportunities. You are still allowed to chat someone up. What matters more than ever is your ability to read the message you receive – something every sexual thug seems incapable of doing. When a woman is not interested, a man should be a gentleman, smile graciously and go away. If you are 17 or 70, the fundamental rules of courting have never changed. Masturbating into a potted plant was never an acceptable way for a man to win the heart of a woman.

What has irrevocably changed about courting since the purging of the pervs is that sexual interest is interpreted as sexual harassment if your status is out of whack. The new golden rule of courting is never ever come on to someone you have power over. Someone younger, more junior, less connected. The expression of sexual interest that is indistinguishable from crass bullying is what undid Weinstein – and deservedly so. You are allowed to get off with your equals. It is wrong to leer, drool or lust over someone who is not your equal, but then it always was wrong and men did it anyway. But one man's banter has always been some woman's harassment.

Columnist Jane Moore recalls a large-breasted colleague entering an editorial conference at the *Sun* to be greeted by the quip, "Anybody order a bouncy castle?"

To which the large-breasted journo (the late Sue Carroll) replied, "I'd better not sit near you then – a small prick would be lethal." So no harm done. But Sue was a grown-up, sassy, confident woman. You should not make jokes about breasts resembling bouncy castles to a woman who is not capable of answering you back and humiliating you. Sexual bullying disguised as harmless fun is off the menu now. And this is a good thing. This is simply introducing good manners into sexual etiquette. But some see this change as the decline of civilisation. There is a form of feminism that is about "torturing men", wrote Douglas Murray in the *Spectator*. He wondered "whether any sex be allowed in the end".

My guess is yes.

The outing of a bunch of sexual bullies is not the end of sex. One middle-aged *Times* columnist fretted that he would no longer be allowed to smile at a pretty girl or put kisses on an email to a female colleague. But why would any man *want* to put kisses on an email to a female colleague? You do that to your mum, not a work colleague who happens to be a woman.

The old laws of attraction still apply. They always will. That is why dating sites shove their most beautiful members to the front of the queue. We are not in the middle of a profound shift in our attitude towards sex so much as a change in our attitude to courting. My guess is that this is the start of a golden age of courtship. Finding love has always been the easy part. Staying together is the hard bit. And with all the temptations of modern courtship – the online cruising, chemsex and text sex – it will get harder still.

But there are a million women who could love you. The problem is time. You will not live long enough to love – truly love, know and cherish – more than four or five of them, absolute max. You should court them well and cherish every moment of consensual joy.

The changes in the way we treat women will mean men are less likely to bully, exploit and harass those who have absolutely zero interest in them. Relationships between men and women will be kinder, fairer and healthier. The idea that this spells the end to sex is bonkers. Like the old song says, the world will always welcome lovers.

Politics

Sadiq Khan is Labour's next PM

From his office above the fray in City Hall, London's 'local statesman' mayor is poised to sidestep the internecine struggles and lead his party's return from the shadows. Perhaps not today – nor even before the next election – but for Britain's most patient politician, the keys to Number Ten are waiting

STORY BY **Matthew d'Ancona**

A dazzling Friday morning in May 2023: the limousine pulls into Downing Street and out steps a diminutive figure, fresh from kissing hands at the palace. He approaches the lectern, ready to tell the nation of his vision for the next five years, and reflects on the path that has led him to the top job.

It had been a gamble, and one that might have gone disastrously wrong. When Theresa May resigned after Britain formally left the EU on 29 March 2019, he had made up his mind – against the strong advice of some of his aides – not to seek a second term as London mayor but to return, if possible, to the Commons.

The new Tory leader, he calculated, would be forced by public exasperation to go to the country sooner rather than later. He also reckoned that Jeremy Corbyn would not win, the air having leaked from his bubble since the high point of summer 2017.

So it proved. Amber Rudd, May's successor, secured a small majority for the Conservatives in the election of 2020. Corbyn quickly stood down to spend more time with his allotment – plunging Labour into its most rancorous leadership contest in living memory. The advantage in that conflict had been the man's relative freedom from faction: he was neither the candidate of Momentum, the left-wing movement, nor of Progress, its closest Blairite equivalent.

Instead, he ran on his record in London and the strength of his public profile – and won. And now he had won again, this time in the greatest race of them all. Step forward, Prime Minister Sadiq Khan.

The precise timing and the identity of the Tory leader he might face when the time comes are a matter of speculation. Khan, who was first elected mayor in 2016, may yet hold on for a second term in City Hall, calculating that the context will be more propitious in 2024. But the core of the plan – a return to the Commons and a run at the top job – is not in doubt. Everything else is detail.

Mayor Sadiq Khan delivers the keynote speech at London's UK Investment Day in November 2016

Born in 1970 to a British Pakistani bus driver and seamstress, Khan was a solicitor before his election as MP for Tooting in 2005. Though he achieved the rank of minister of state for transport under Gordon Brown, he was rarely cited as a superstar-in-waiting. After Brown's departure in 2010, he ran Ed Miliband's leadership campaign and went on to serve him as shadow secretary of state for justice, shadow lord chancellor and shadow minister for London.

Again, he was not generally thought to be in the first rank of Labour politicians. When the succession was discussed, it was Yvette Cooper, Andy Burnham and Chuka Umunna whose names were routinely mentioned.

Khan's stroke of political genius was to see that the mayoralty offered him an alternative – and more effective – way of making his mark on the national stage. Better to run London with panache than to plod along as a little-known member of the shadow cabinet.

Adopted as Labour's nominee for mayor in September 2015, he defeated the Tories' candidate, Zac Goldsmith, the following May, after a campaign in which the Conservatives' ugly insinuation that Khan was associated with Muslim extremists backfired badly.

From the start, he flourished in his new metropolitan role, grasping instinctively that success in municipal office depended upon practical success rather than ideological warfare. He quickly introduced the one-hour Hopper bus fare and made progress on the Night Tube. Measures against air pollution were high on his agenda, notably the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ), which will be introduced next year. On housing, he has relaxed the planning rules governing London's 13 outer suburbs as part of a broader strategy to build 650,000 new houses by 2029.

With the excellent Patrick Hennessy guiding his communications, the mayor has also developed a flair for the theatrical flourish. In September last year, his personal approval ratings soared after Transport For London refused to renew Uber's licence, citing its "lack of corporate responsibility" over the reporting of criminal offences, medical certificates and driver background checks. For the first time, a senior British politician was taking on a tech giant, a consumerist David waving a fist at a cyber-Goliath. Londoners lapped it up.

Distancing himself from Corbyn's grand national project, Khan has instead focused on the needs of his city: he is as likely to be seen at the opening of an East End market as the first night of a play at the new Bridge Theatre. His responses to the multiple terrorist incidents in London since he became Mayor have been poised and statesmanlike.

Like a US state governor preparing a run at the presidency, he has made his case for a bigger job through local action rather than speechifying and faction-fighting. His long-term strategy depends upon Labour growing weary of ideological struggle and looking for a leader hardened by practical experience.

And his greatest ally in this plan? None other than Donald Trump. Every time the president or a member of his family tweets disobligingly about Khan – which is often – his prospects of eventual glory increase.

To have the world's most powerful man attacking you as crudely as Trump has the mayor (sneering, for instance, at his "pathetic excuse" after the London Bridge terror attacks) is a gift to a Labour politician. It has made his name globally. It may yet ease his path to Number Ten, and – who knows? – a surreal meeting in the Oval Office with the man who did so much to make it possible. GQ

Photograph **Getty Images**

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URBAN

From coats and rain jackets to shirts and hoodies, the new collection from Primark has everything you need to overhaul your street-smart wardrobe this season

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Opposite page: Denim jacket, £15. Shirt, £8. Trousers, £10. All available in store at **Primark**.

Jumper, £6. Shirt, £10.

Opposite page: Jacket, £12. Shirt, £10. T-shirt, £2. Joggers, £16. Trainers, £10. Jacket, £30. All available in store at **Primark**.

Opposite page: Denim jacket, £15. Hoody, £10. Trousers, £10.

Jacket, £12. Shirt, £3.50. Trousers, £10. Trainers, £12. Jacket, £15. All available in store at **Primark**.

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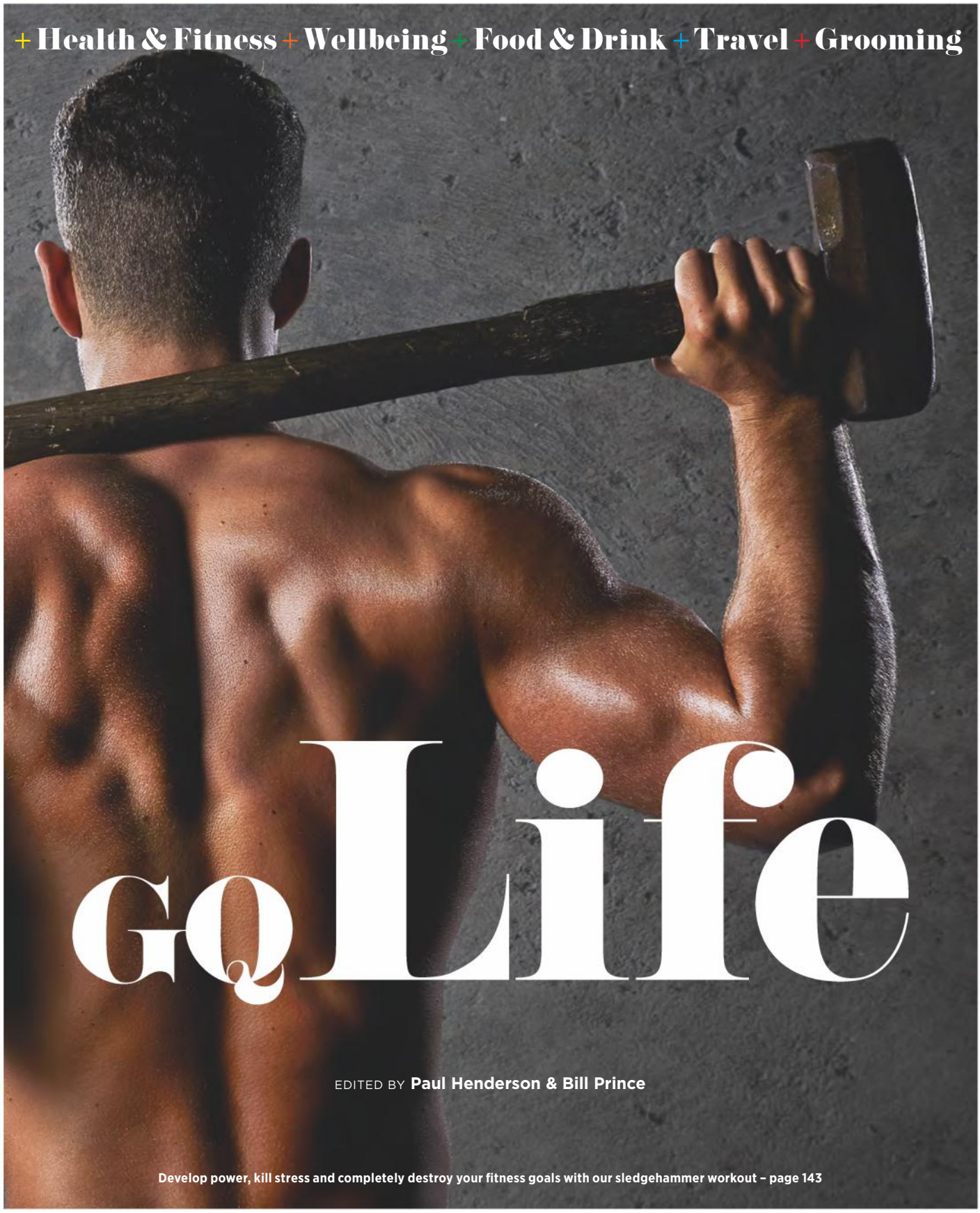

GQ Life

EDITED BY **Paul Henderson & Bill Prince**

Develop power, kill stress and completely destroy your fitness goals with our sledgehammer workout – page 143

Photograph **Ben Riggott** Grooming **Samantha Cooper at Carol Hayes Management** Model **Bradley Simmonds**

Want to be fitter, faster, sharper, stronger? Of course you do. **To explore yourself, your limits and your world?** No doubt. With all the answers to the questions that count – what to eat (and where), where to go (and how), how to live (and why). **Your very best self starts right here**

The Competition

Win!

A Raleigh Strada Elite ebike
Worth £2,250

We've teamed up with British bike brand Raleigh to offer an ebike to one *GQ* winner – the Strada Elite Electric, worth £2,250.

Raleigh's new ebike revolutionises the urban commute. It features a stylish aluminium frame, lightweight carbon fork and 650b wheels with high-volume tyres for added grip and comfort. Shimano hydraulic disc brakes provide smooth stopping power. The Raleigh Strada Elite boasts a top-of-the-range Shimano Steps E6000 ebike system, with a powerful centre-mount motor and a derailleur with nine gears. Its 400Wh battery offers a range – depending on terrain and level of assistance selected – of between 40 and 125km.

For a chance to win, answer this question:

What size battery does the Raleigh Strada Elite ebike have?

a) 40Wh

b) 4Wh

c) 400Wh

To submit your answer (and find T&Cs), visit gq.uk/raleigh and enter your details. Prize may vary in style or colour, depending to availability. For more information on the Raleigh cycling range, visit raleigh.co.uk

Life Cycle

Ebikes take charge

With ranges increased by advanced battery life and popularity pushing prices downhill, ebike sales are getting a boost from urban commuters

Fittingly, I was in God's country when I had an epiphany. High in the North Pennines, I pulled my bike over to the side of the road and looked down on my friends in the valley below, grunting and groaning. I was barely glowing. The difference was not speed, skill or doping. As Gary Numan once enquired, "Are friends electric?" No, Gary, in this instance they weren't. But I was.

Until you've glided effortlessly up a one-in-five hill on an ebike, it's hard to imagine what all the fuss is about. Once you have, it's hard to imagine anything else.

The ebike market is booming – driven by commuters who want to cycle to work without arriving in a sweaty mess – and has gone from virtually nothing five years ago to 100,000 sold every year in Britain. True, it still only makes up about four per cent of the overall UK cycle market, but as Raleigh's MD Pippa Wibberley is keen to stress, a sea change has taken place. "We are doubling our sales every year," she enthuses.

Massive improvements in battery technology and charging time, as well as lighter frames, lie behind increased consumer confidence in the ebike. Competition and economies of scale are seeing prices come down and customers are now able to get software updates with newer models.

According to Jez Loftus, Trek's ebike expert, customers are embracing the rapid pace of technological change. "An ebike is going to become like a phone," he explains, "in that you'll update it to make it more efficient."

All this is a far cry from the days when electric bikes were the kind of thing you saw advertised in the back of a Sunday supplement. "The ebike has now become a credible part of sport," says Wibberley. "Downhill mountain bikers are starting to take them seriously. That was a bit of a tipping point."

As cars are increasingly driven out of the city, ebikes are ready to take you there. Don't fight the power. **John Naughton**

Mustang Comp Electric by Raleigh

Stay true to racing's roots with this drop-handlebar beauty. The Shimano motor will make you feel fit for the Tour.
£2,800. raleigh.co.uk

The Electric by Brompton

All the power you'd expect from a collaboration with Formula One team Williams. All the convenience of a foldaway Brompton.
£2,595. brompton.com

Super Commuter Plus 9 by Trek

Bosch technology and a commanding design make this the daddy of the urban commute.
£4,000. trekbikes.com

Primal Training

The time has come to get in touch with your inner caveman so ditch the dumbbells, barbells and expensive gym equipment and look for some rocks to lift instead. Yes, Flintstone fitness is here, and in this new series of exercises you'll be pulling, pushing, smashing and grabbing your way to super fitness. *Smash it!*

Sledgehammer tyre slams

This month, let the Norse gods inspire your workout, as personal trainer Jonathan Goodair explains a move that Thor would be proud of

If you're looking for a way to relieve stress and improve your general sporting performance, try picking up a sledgehammer. The repetitive nature of this move, plus the necessary coordination of major muscle groups to coordinate makes sledgehammer tyre slams a fun, efficient and functional way to condition the whole body, ensuring that areas such as back, shoulders, arms, legs and core become endurance powerhouses. Sledgehammer training will also improve hand-eye coordination and mental focus.

30

Rest 30 seconds after each set. Perform 3 sets in total.

15

Perform 15 swings then change grip to swing over opposite shoulder for another 15 swings to complete one set.

Directions

Make sure that you choose a suitable sledgehammer weight. Start light and slow, build technique and confidence then move on.

1. Stand square on to the tyre, feet just wider than hip-distance apart.
2. If you're right-handed, hold the bottom of the shaft with your right hand with your left hand higher up the shaft. Reverse this position if you're left-handed.
3. Slowly raise the sledgehammer up over your left shoulder.
4. Keep your feet firmly planted, engage your core and soften knees and hips.
5. As you swing the sledgehammer down, push your hips back and bend your knees, sliding your upper hand down the shaft. Maintain a strong core to stabilise and support your spine.

For more information, visit jonathangoodair.com

Photograph **Ben Riggott** Grooming **Samantha Cooper at Carol Hayes Management** Model **Bradley Simmonds**

Health hack... The swole truth

Borrow a tip from bodybuilding that's about to go mainstream by practising occlusion training this month. This counterintuitive technique involves (gently) tying off blood supply to muscle groups when you lift to see dramatic results in strength and size. Use wrist wraps for upper arms and knee wraps for legs, then lift (no more than 35 per cent of your one-rep maximum). Mix it up with regular lifting and the gains will be evident by the end of the month.

Shorts, £35. Trainers, £65. Both by **Adidas**. adidas.co.uk

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Retail Therapy

Zen and the art of supermarket shopping

For a short while, forget mindfulness, meditation and therapy, the search for self needn't be a chore, says a hovering George Chesterton. Enlightenment? That's on aisle four, sir...

My weekly pilgrimage is now a pillar of my wellbeing. It's not about a crisis in masculinity: the "Big Shop" is nonbinary. Supermarket bread may have a shelf life shorter than Scarlett Moffatt's autobiography, but this is really about an age-old wrestle with a sense of identity for which food has always been totemic. It has become a ritual that is now therapy of its own.

This isn't about getting away from my wife or two daughters either. It's not about downtime or me-time. The Big Shop transcends time itself. It is a mixture of serenity and the blinding white light of clear thought. That and the prospect of Daddy's red and white calming juice in aisle ten.

My relationship with food has always run along the psychological cracks that appear through life. In childhood, food signified loss and deprivation. In early manhood, it meant a lack of direction and choice. Some of these things were my responsibility and some were not. But now food means freedom. It means family and it means belonging. The superabundance of food is an inexhaustible source of delight; a sense of wonder locked to a memory of leaner and blander times. George Bernard Shaw wrote: "There is no sincerer love than the love of food." My children are too young to read this, but one day perhaps they will and I hope they respect my searing candour.

Every Saturday morning (the exact time depends on the hangover and what the girls are doing), I dress in yesterday's clothes, settle into the car and then drive for five minutes, dodging the other parents taking their children to football, ballet or Mandarin classes. I turn left and up the ramp of the raised car park with the relief of a hunted medieval pig rustler reaching the boundary of a church. The air seems clearer up there somehow, away from the other steppenwolves below who steal designated family spaces. That kind of bad faith is the antithesis of the Big Shop.

Among the fajita mix, the mind wanders, visiting the places it rarely goes

After leaving the lift, I pull a trolley away from its steely herd and roll into the air-conditioned splendour of the entrance, past the women with spiked purple hair on the customer service desk, beyond the newspapers and dripping flowers and into the fresh food aisles. Chewie... we're home.

The greens to my left speak of school dinner obligation. Priapic courgettes replay the memories of jumbled dishes made on a shoestring and in a rush. The broccoli brings up memories of bringing it up, a regurgitation of regurgitation. That was when things were bad. Back when Alpen was exotic and the unwrapping of the orange mesh around a glass bottle of Lucozade meant the worst of the flu would soon be over. A time when, to paraphrase Chris Morris, a rustic Etruscan pizza with goats' cheese and caramelised »

Illustrations **Britt Spencer**

» onion was the stuff of a madman's dreams. Age has softened me to these life-giving plants. I understand that I need them more than they need me. But I still prefer fruit (in the next aisle to my right). Fruit, at least, has the benefit of being sweet, which I have always regarded – along with salt – as the mark of something good. I respect vegetables, but I will never love them.

Supermarkets are very bright places. This may seem like an imposition to tired eyes, but the rainbow colours designating the taxonomy of meat and fish is rather a respite, one of a few places (my own house included) to escape Farrow & Ball-land and its deadbeat shades of green, grey and blue or, as they call it, Whale Carcass, Ketamine Angst and Jaundiced Smurf.

Most people are kind in supermarkets. It's as if the presence of so much salesmanship forces those in the eye of the storm to acknowledge each other's lost humanity. The congested dairy and bread aisles provide the most obvious example of the supermarket's societal role reversal, in which teenagers become polite and obliging while the feral elderly fight for every spare inch of floor space. The repeated attempts by grumpy outriders to turn my shop into *Mad Max: Fury Road* are doomed to fail. Do your worst, granny: you may already have cut me up by the apricots, but another crash of metal on metal is not going to disrupt my trance by the poppy-seed baguettes. I breathe deeply and roll on.

In a supermarket, I can escape the mind fungus of Facebook gifs of Gemma Collins that start "When your best friend…" or Owen Jones' moral totalitarianism on Twitter. In a supermarket, there is no anger over the shameless mendacity of the idiot-farming right or the magical-thinking hypocrisy of the left; the vandalism of Trump; or the inevitability of a mass extinction caused by an antibiotic-resistant plague. I concern myself with whether I want to spend a little more on the imported smoked paprika or how to resist the continuously on-offer Häagen-Dazs. These trifling things foster a sense of being lucky, which, I conclude, I definitely am. They encourage acceptance and giving thanks. If the child is the father of the man, then the child was probably a greedy bastard. Except now I can afford to buy what I want, which is, in its own way, a little miracle. Talking of trifles, people may say Elaine Paige is the original "triple threat", but those people obviously haven't tried ice cream, custard and evaporated milk in the same bowl.

A trolley crash is not going to disrupt my trance by the baguettes

Supermarkets do not disengage me from the world – they connect me. In a supermarket I feel as tolerant and open-minded as I do anywhere. To be engaged in the sense we use it now really means to be obsessed or relentless, but that's not for me. I can't be certain or convinced about anything. I'm no centrist dad – I welcome radical thinking. Could we replace the Royal Family with labradoodles? British people love dogs and it would save a lot of money. And why not renationalise Fridays while we're at it? Nothing is off the table. Among the egg noodles and fajita mix, the mind wanders, visiting the places it rarely goes on the commute, at the desk or even on a beach.

Wine, beers and spirits are not the trial they once were. Drinking remains a primal pleasure, but the Big Shop state-of-mind means desire is not an ache that (always) needs a painkiller. The alcohol aisles are also booby-trapped with the more esoteric ingredients, such as "Moroccan inspired breadcrumbs", a name which, lacking a hyphen, suggests breadcrumbs that have travelled from North Africa following a religious conversion. Everything, even the garnishes, is on a spiritual journey here.

Once the alcohol has been navigated without excess, the snacks are the harshest test of my harmony. There is nothing in this world more likely to shock me out of a higher state of consciousness than a multipack of Squares crisps. But once I've made my choices I find a checkout and prepare for the end, the point that reminds me of the millions of endings that accumulate in a lifetime and how little we can do about them. Packing the car is the last suspended note of the symphony's final movement.

Reversing out over pools of rainwater on the sheet-grey concrete, then accelerating forward, back into the world, I know I had my time out of mind, or mind out of time. Our mental states are always at risk of going rogue, so to avoid becoming North Korea I seek out this hour or so amid the organic passion fruit yoghurt and easy-peelers. It's why I do the Big Shop.

"We should start doing this online," says Mrs C. "It's so much more convenient. And we wouldn't keep forgetting things." But I don't want to be constantly reminded by an algorithm that I once mistakenly bought frankfurters in brine.

Dear modern world, please don't take my Big Shop away from me.

Kit Bag + Travel light, but always travel right This month: golf

Spider putter
by TaylorMade

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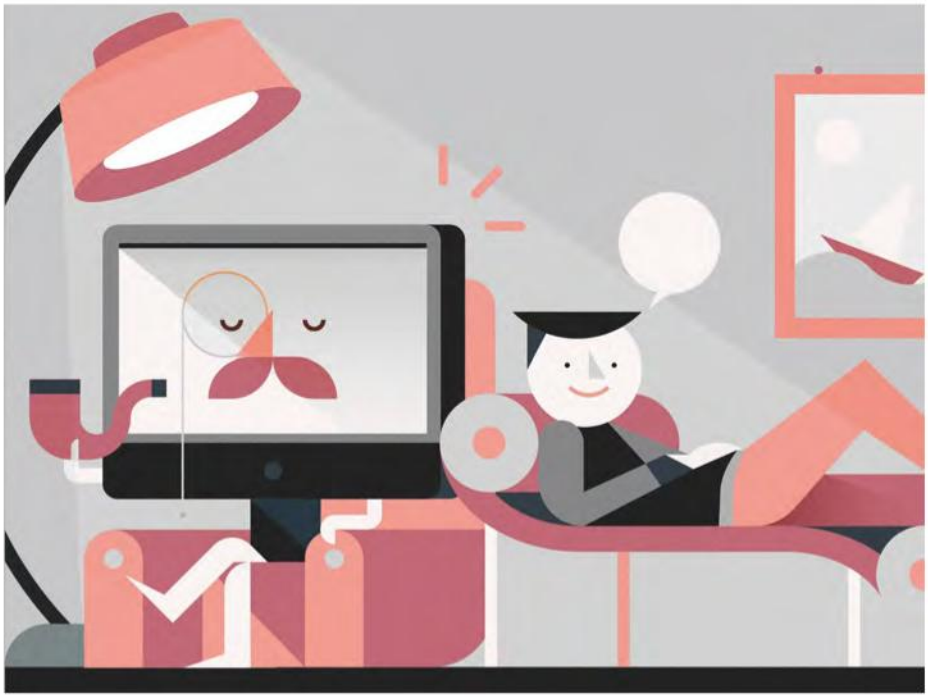

Online Therapy

Pipeline personal development

A self-development course that you can do from your sofa, The Life Class is therapy for those who don't do therapy. Its creator, Jacqueline Hurst, explains...

The Life Class was born out of frustration from seeing so many men and women unable to process their thoughts and feelings clearly. I understood the frustration because I had been the same. When I was at school, no one ever taught me how to deal with the emotional stuff. As I grew into an adult I needed to learn how to deal with life on life's terms. Being taught maths and geography was great but no one said, "Hey, this is what you do when you feel stressed out, angry or down." So I looked for other ways to handle my emotions that weren't exactly... ideal.

After ten years of self-destruction, I turned my life around and built my business by coaching others in how to deal with life and how to simply "feel good" no matter what. I have seen thousands of men who are embarrassed about how they feel – that being depressed or anxious or scared or lonely is the worst thing in the world for them; that they are the only ones in the world that feel this way; that they can't talk to their friends, wives or parents for fear of being seen as weak or not good enough. The more I heard this same story, the more I believed I needed to help on a much bigger scale, which is why I created an online self-development course at my virtual school, The Life Class.

I see everyone today investing in their physical health: eating organically, juicing and working out has become an important part of life. Today, we have access to more insider information about how to keep fit and healthy than ever before. But we neglect what's running through our minds. Our emotional and mental health are rarely given a second thought. We are not living consciously or observing how we are making all-important decisions and this often means we don't get the results or the life we want. It's important to acknowledge that what is going on in our heads is critical to how all areas of our lives develop. And it's imperative to acknowledge that it is emotional intelligence that is the key to real success. I am a big believer that to live our best lives, we need to get the healthiest mind possible.

I created The Life Class to help people feel better, in their own time, in their own way, at their own pace. It was built and put together from all the experience I have had working with clients, in a worksheet and online video format. It is a comprehensive course that uses effective tools, techniques and concepts, allowing you to truly understand yourself better. It is a simple but effective way of helping those who want to feel and live better and more optimally by thinking, behaving and acting with a higher degree of emotional intelligence. The Life Class was simply developed to help people upgrade their life, have better relationships and to be less anxious and stressed by optimising their way of thinking.

As you go through the course, you start to take control of how you feel instead of letting your feelings control you. You learn how to release negative thought patterns, anxieties and worries, which naturally begin to lift. And the best part about The Life Class is that you can do all of this in the comfort of your own home, on the tube or waiting for a date. No one even has to know what you are doing, although I promise you they will notice that you've changed – and for the better. Think of it as hot yoga for your mind.

thelifeclass.com

70%

of adults who regularly use media devices have experienced symptoms of digital eyestrain

+ Seriously. It's time to start wearing anti-blue light glasses

We've told you not to use your phone late at night, but of course you haven't. Just like you haven't stopped using your laptop, playing your games console or watching your HD TV. All that harmful high-energy blue light is still damaging your eyes, wrecking your circadian rhythm and inhibiting the body's production of melatonin, making it difficult for you to get a decent night's sleep. The solution could be Swannies blue-light blocking glasses (*swanwicksleep.com*). Simply pop them on a couple of hours before bed and reap the benefits of better sleep.
From £49. At amazon.co.uk

Illustrations by **Francesco Poroli**

Tried & Tested

The Life Class: does it work?

Journalist Alice Hart-Davis puts the Jacqueline Hurst method through its paces

Let's jump right in here. How well do you get on with your thoughts? Until I got stuck into this programme, I hadn't realised quite how vital it is – for a happier, saner, easier existence – to notice your thoughts and the things you say to yourself and, where necessary, to challenge and replace them with kinder, more helpful alternatives. Have I lost you already? I'll try to explain.

There are six modules in The Life Class (*see left*), each composed of bite-sized, manageable online sections, with videos and written notes to explain each bit and a bunch of worksheets to grapple with, so it gives you the full benefit of therapy for the price of a single session of face-to-face coaching (*£300*).

The idea is to help people help themselves and bring the idea of mental wellness to the fore, and creator Jacqueline Hurst has worked hard to simplify the complex underlying messages of life coaching. Her programme is easy to engage with, but this isn't just stuff you read and that's that: you need to get your head around it, ponder it, then the work – applying the lessons to your own life issues – really starts.

Take all sections on thoughts, feelings and beliefs, for instance. Did you know that your thoughts create your feelings? No one else can "make" you feel anything. What's making you feel anything are your own thoughts.

And beliefs. They're just thoughts you've thought again and again until they stuck, or arbitrary rules that your family or society has laid down in your mind. They're really powerful and frequently limiting but get this – they're not necessarily true.

Of course, you can think and believe anything you want, but if you are endlessly recycling pessimistic ideas about yourself or about, say, your ability to find a better job or a partner, or to achieve a goal, well, it doesn't help. And it really is within your power to change.

The lightbulb moment came when all this sank in. When I caught myself spiralling downwards in negative thoughts ("That will never work" or "I'm not worth it") that made me feel hopeless, what I needed to do was challenge those ideas and come up with alternatives. "Is that thought true?" I would ask myself sternly. "Who says it won't work?" Or, a new favourite thought-trick borrowed from lifestyle experimenter and podcaster Tim Ferriss, "What would this thing look like if it was easy?" I found that even just trying new thoughts on for size, as it were, could shift my mood for the better.

There's a lot more to the course, but this bit has proved a most useful trick to have up my sleeve and now it feels like a game. Every negative thought that I catch gets swapped for a better one. You have to believe the new thought, to make it stick. That's another bit of learning. But d'you know? It works, and if I can learn it, you could, too.

Photograph **Kurt Iswarienko**

Celebrity Life Coach

The GQ Pep Talk with... Chris Pratt

The star of this summer's all-conquering box office super-smash Avengers: Infinity War explains how to break through to greatness

In his words:
"I had to hustle hard and go hungry. I had to eat sardines and figure out how to get gas money. I never had a plan B. I never stopped believing. Ever. Don't give up. Apply pressure for as long as it takes. It will break before you do. Go get it."

In other words:
To achieve anything requires sacrifice, but by persevering you will prevail.

In his words:
"On a scale of one to ten, I kind of hit ten when I stopped having to serve people food. So I've been riding ten ever since."

In other words:
Don't forget where you started from. It's a positive because it will remind you of what you have achieved already.

In his words:
"If you don't believe in yourself, find a way to. Because even more than you want it, you must believe it. And learn about yourself. Who are you? What's your voice? What are you dying to contribute?"

In other words:
Know yourself. Be honest in your self-appraisal: work on your weaknesses, acknowledge your strengths and have a target.

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Wave catchers: Timothée Chalamet and Kit Harington

Illustration **Sam Gilbey**

The Trend

The mane course

From Hollywood to the streets of Italy, flyaway curls and wayward waves are sweeping the field

Edited by **Teo van den Broeke**

Timothée Chalamet, the breakout star of Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me By Your Name*, attended the Berluti show in Paris during fashion week back in January. Fresh-faced, model-slim and immaculately dressed in a purple (yes, purple!) velvet suit, the 22-year-old New Yorker looked every bit the seasoned film star. The success of Chalamet's look, however, was as much down to his outfit as it was the hair on his head. Curly and wayward, there was a Gallic insouciance to the whole look. In the same month that Prince William got a buzz cut, Becks embraced the man bun and Trump's fiery, furious comb-over got far too much screen time for anyone's good, Chalamet's exuberant fizz of hair felt hopeful and fun. He's not alone in embracing the look either. Kit Harington rocks his neo-curls like a pro, as does Brazilian model Marlon Teixeira. The hairstyle was present on the runways too. At MSGM's Autumn/Winter 2018 show in Milan, all the models (street-cast Italian students) sported big floppy hairdos. At Danish brand Tonsure, waves came loose and, in some cases, were shoulder-length. And at Prada, the cuts were wild and curly (though most were hidden under bucket hats). **TvdB**

Curl talk

Here, to help you achieve the Chalamet spray yourself, is stylist Liz Taw's guide to getting it right...

Who does it work for? "This hairstyle works best on wavy or curly hair textures. If you have very fine or straight hair, this style isn't for you. It looks particularly good on those with fine features." **How do I style it?** "You want to create a lived-in curl, so start with a shampoo that won't make your hair feel too clean and fluffy (such as Aveda Men's Pureformance shampoo or Bouclème hair cleanser for very frizzy/dry curls). Following that, use a good leave-in conditioner. A creamy consistency works well for thicker hair to relax the curls. Something with an oil added will suit dry, frizzy hair (Less Is More's lavender smoothing balm, for instance). For wavy hair types, your cream needs to add moisture and activate the curls (Aveda's Be Curly is perfect for this). For limp hair that needs some volume, I like to use something with a bit of hold, such as Bumble And Bumble styling lotion or Bouclème's curl-defining gel. Mist roots to mid-length with the styling spray then use the defining product on mid-length to ends. **To finish:** Let your hair air-dry or use a diffuser attachment on your blow-dryer. Opt for a high heat and low air, lifting the root if you need volume and/or curl activation. Once your hair is mostly dry, you can start to gently scrunch it with your hand to break up the curls."

Pureformance shampoo by **Aveda Men**. £19.50. aveda.co.uk

Curl cleanser by **Bouclème**. £15. boucleme.co.uk

Smoothing balm by **Less Is More**. £22. At content beautywellbeing.com

Be Curly curl enhancer by **Aveda**. £21.50. aveda.co.uk

Styling creme by **Bumble And Bumble**. £18. At Liberty. libertylondon.com

Curl defining gel by **Bouclème**. £15. boucleme.co.uk

Bear Grylls #32

How to succeed

(and still be quite liked)

Sometimes a man's fortune is determined by Lady Luck – but how he handles it comes wholly from within

Before knowing how to cope with success, we need to understand what success is and what it isn't. True success is not about money or celebrity or power. If we want to quantify success, we would do better to measure it in terms of the quality of our relationships and attitudes. If you meet a billionaire who has a string of broken friendships and who is abusive, angry and cynical, can you really say that person is rich? True success is more about being fulfilled, happy and respecting your life.

In the event that we also manage to create some wealth along the way, or obtain some influence or fame, how should we deal with outward "success" without becoming the kind of person nobody really wants to be around?

I believe that it is possible to have some wealth, influence and fame without being a monster, but it takes a little work. "Success", in this sense, tends to amplify who we are. When unchecked, less attractive qualities can emerge, so it's imperative to keep a vigilant eye on our character. To do this, remember that a big part of any worldly success you might experience is often down to chance. Even for Bill Gates or Barack Obama, good luck has a big part to play. It's a fact of life that plenty of people who deserve success don't get it and plenty who don't deserve it do. Much of life is down to being in the right place at the right time, so drop self-importance and never cease to be grateful.

Success tends to amplify who we are and less attractive qualities can emerge

The other ingredient to success is that much of it comes down to the help and influence of others. Isaac Newton said, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." The same is true of anybody who has achieved anything worthwhile. You can guarantee that they have received invaluable help, be it emotional, physical or financial, on their journey. If we forget this, we make a big mistake. And no one likes a boaster.

Generosity is also key to being successful. Give more than people expect and give privately where you can. Maybe that means helping a friend who is struggling to pay their rent or mortgage, or perhaps someone you know who desperately needs a holiday they can't afford. Hoarding money never made anyone happy and it's an indication that the money is controlling you, rather than you controlling the money.

And always give rather than lend. Know that sharing your good fortune is the simplest way to find happiness, whereas keeping it all to yourself drains you of joy. There's a reason why the very wealthy so often turn to philanthropy. The dogged accumulation of money can be a pretty hollow thing if it doesn't go hand in hand with a will to use that money to improve the world in whatever small way you can.

Next, resist the temptation to be flash. Showing off your success is not an appealing habit. Don't go too far the other way, either. I've met billionaires who never treat themselves to anything and refuse to squander a penny, ever. That is also a bit crazy. Enjoy a few treats every now and again. It's about finding the line between not flaunting the fruits of our labours and allowing ourselves to appreciate and enjoy them. When you meet a wealthy, famous or powerful person who radiates humility, it speaks more about their character, journey and wealth than any private jet can.

A common bad habit of some successful people is not listening to others. Perhaps it's a belief that what they have to say matters more than what you are saying, but they are wrong. Everyone has their story. Listen to people and always give them your time. It shows that you value them and that speaks volumes about your character.

Finally, try to use any worldly success to buy yourself time. It's the only thing in life that is truly at a premium. My grandpa used to say: "There is always music in the garden, but our hearts have to be very still to hear it." This means savouring rather than squandering the relentless passage of time. Take delight in the simple things in life: your garden; a walk in the sea air; holding hands with your partner. Focus on those things that are natural and that restore you. In the final analysis, these are the moments that have real value and speak to our true wealth.

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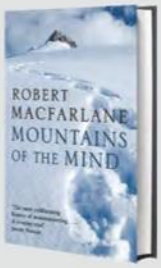
Wellness



+Peak power Find new perspective by taking the high ground

I am fascinated by what makes people feel truly alive. I often ask people about when it happens to them and the list is technicolour: when I am sailing; playing with my children; speaking at a conference; on holiday; going fast; doing something that terrifies me... the list goes on, but one of the most common replies is "On top of a mountain". According to *Mountains Of The Mind* (*Granta, £10*) by Robert MacFarlane, four million Brits consider themselves hill walkers. As he explains, "A mountain is a collaboration of the physical forms of the world with the imaginations of humans. It is what we make it." When we climb, the physical exertion gets the heart pumping, heavy breathing oxygenates the blood and feeds the brain. It requires focus and tenacity and delivers a sense of achievement and often an element of risk. When we reach the summit and enjoy the vista, time stands still. Our perception is enhanced as we energetically meld with the planet and become present. There is nothing missing and nothing to add. It is just perfect. The effects can last for some time. So, find a hill, climb it and see what happens for you. **Chris Baréz-Brown** *uppingyourelvis.com*

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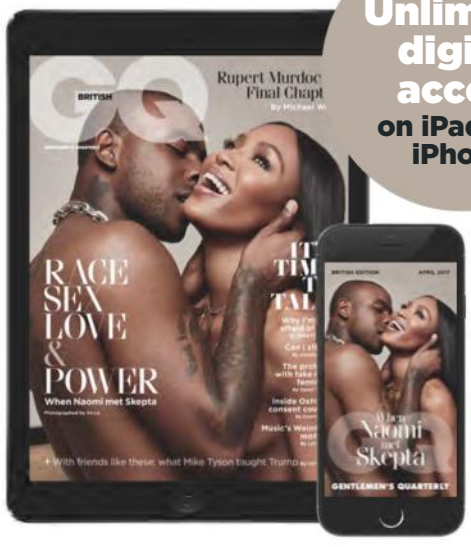

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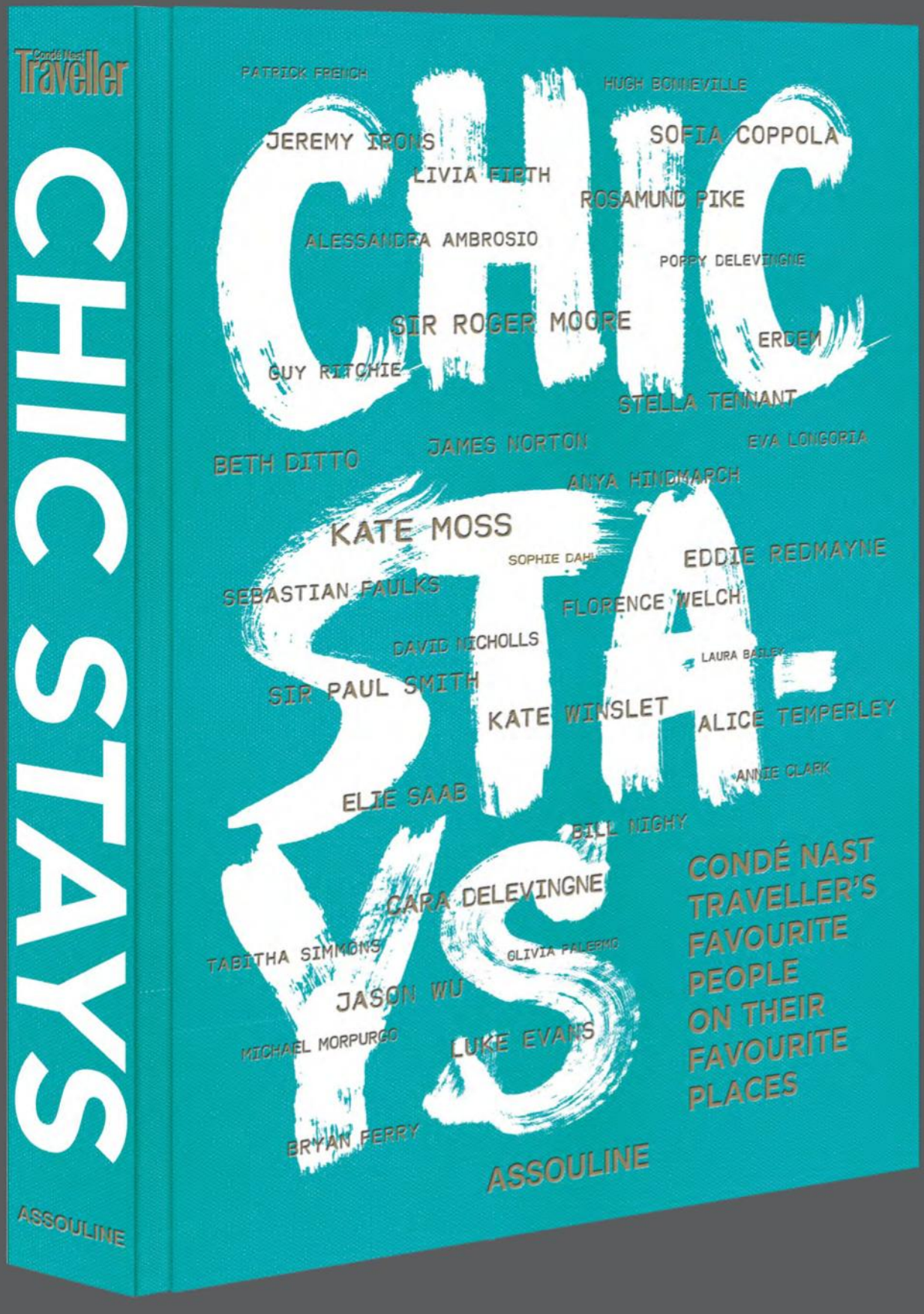

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+ **Dylan Jones** steps out of time and into a vanishing paradise p.157

A welcome reception at Shangri-La's Villingili Island Resort & Spa

GQ Travel

Where the top flight comes to stay

EDITED BY **Bill Prince**

GQ.co.uk

This month on

Fly

...away to Chester as we test a new Dassault Falcon 2000LXS in our *GQ* Private Jet YouTube series. This brand-new aircraft is in the Luxaviation UK fleet and has space for ten passengers, a cruising speed of 530mph and a range of 4,000 miles.

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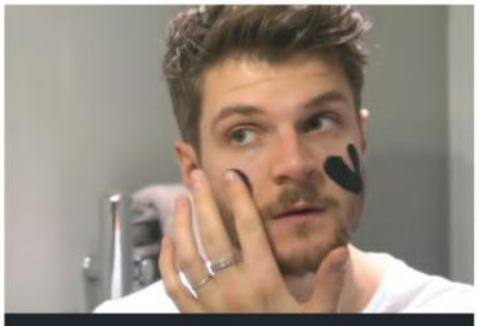

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The Destination

In a world of its own, the Maldives

Cast consciousness adrift in the service-led repose of Shangri-La's Villingili Resort & Spa, the expansive pocket universe with a time zone all to itself

Story by **Dylan Jones**

From left: On the deck of a Villingili villa; the island on Addu Atoll; cocktail reception at M-Lounge, one of three bars at the resort

In the world of luxury travel, big is rarely good. In point of fact, big is usually bad. Big is not just too egalitarian, it's gauche. Industrial. Mass market. Package. Big is what happens when success seeks an escape route, either via scale or diffusion. And often hubris. Big is reductive and the kind of place you just don't want to go.

Big is particularly difficult on islands, where every square inch of sand, every drooping palm, every slatted fence has usually had a use found for it, a point, contributing to an ecosystem defined and designed by the kind of architects and stakeholders who don't like waste – or at least not waste they can't maximise. When island life goes large, you find yourself in a queue for the kiwi and the papaya at breakfast; you find yourself squashed in between rowing Brits and partying Russians at dinner; and you find yourself staring at garishly attired people on jet skis who, by rights, shouldn't be allowed on pavements, let alone glorified mopeds.

No. Where island life is concerned, big is far from beautiful.

And never more so than in the Maldives. Here in a place so beautiful, so gilded, of such temporary splendour (because of rising sea levels, the Maldives could be completely submerged in 70 to 80 years), small – and by small, I mean bespoke, boutique, intimate and often reassuringly expensive – has always been better. The Como Cocoa Island resort only has 33 suites and villas, for example, and Gili Lankanfushi only 45, while Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru has 48, Soneva Fushi 59 and Baros 75, etc.

So why would you try anything bigger?

Well, try this place for size.

The Shangri-La's Villingili Resort & Spa is the largest single-resort island in the Maldives, as well as being the archipelago's most southerly atoll. It is nearly two miles long and yet feels genuinely secluded and unpopulated. Rich in vegetation, with thousands of palms keeping you sheltered from the sun, this is a large, high-end resort that has the atmosphere of somewhere a quarter of its size. Unlike some of the largest resorts on some of the smaller islands (I've stayed at a few and they're pretty grim), the staff (650 of them at high season) are calm and polite, the restaurants exceptional but informal and the gears generally low. To accentuate the feeling of disconnectedness, they even alter the clocks here – principally to accommodate for sunlight – giving themselves their own time zone. When you're on the boat from Gan (the southernmost Maldivian airport, into which you fly from Malé) and you're first told about this, you immediately think it's a gimmick, but not only does it work logistically, it actually makes you feel as though you are even farther from civilisation than you already are in this part of the world. Not only is Villingili Island Brobdingnagian by Maldivian standards, it also boasts its own mini mountain and the highest point in the country: the five-metre "Mount Villingili", a regular setting for candlelit dinners. Here, on the largest smallest resort you're ever likely to visit, even the tiniest things are elevated to grandiose heights.

Here, even the tiniest things are elevated to grandiosity

Anyone who has been to the Maldives more than once, and who wallows in its relaxed nature and attention to detail (the islands continue to attract the kind of devotion that the Aman resorts inspire), cannot fail to be overwhelmed by the service or amenities here. There are plenty of the usual underwater adventures – with a dive centre as proficient as any other Maldivian resort I've been to – and it even has a nine-hole golf course. Again, initially you think this might be a gimmick, something designed for honeymooning couples to muck about on when they eventually crawl out of their villas, but it's actually a fully playable course. I played it twice, losing so many balls I was worried I might have created a new rubber reef on the surfside of the island, but I imagine few enthusiasts would be disappointed by its size or complexity. »

Painterly sunsets at the beachfront M-Lounge

Emirates flies from London Heathrow to Malé from £829 return. emirates.com

» One afternoon we went on a dolphin cruise – one of those activities that Maldivian resorts offer as a matter of course, along with coral planting, cooking lessons (pretty much always Maldivian curry) and romantic candlelit dinners on the beach. Our expectations were low, as in my experience these excursions tend to belong to the "all gong and no dinner" category, however, on this occasion we saw hundreds of spinner dolphins, the ones who excel at acrobatic displays, following our boat like happy-go-lucky outriders. This experience alone would have made the holiday more than memorable.

The only negative aspect of the resort is one that unfortunately affects many Maldivian islands: the state of its reef. Due to the effects of over-fishing, pollution and global warming – and if anyone is still in any doubt as to the acuteness of the problem, just speak to a marine biologist (the planet has lost roughly half its coral reefs in the past 30 years) – the reefs surrounding Villingili Island have started to become bleached and are quickly dying. The problem is exacerbated by the island's proximity to the equator and so snorkelling trips are a lot less fulfilling than they can be in a resort such as Baros, for instance, where you can literally swim out to a living reef just yards from your beach villa. Most resorts in the archipelago are aware of this problem, not just from an ecological point of view, but from an economic one too. If the sea becomes a less interesting place to explore, then tourists are obviously going to be less inclined to come. Yes, the family saw a manta ray, a turtle and an octopus, but the coral itself is a sight for sore eyes.

With a resort of this size, you might think that the accommodation might be somewhat regimented, but this is not the case, with huge water villas, uncompromising beach villas and even Swiss-style stilted houses offering ridiculously panoramic ocean views. This was the first time I'd seen such places, and they're more than a novelty, being spacious, rather opulent, and giving you vantage points you don't find anywhere else on the island. They are like large treehouses facing out to sea, offering a *Swiss Family Robinson* vibe; they are particularly popular with honeymooners and visitors from the Middle East, as you can't be seen by anybody but the bats above.

Even the spa didn't disappoint. I've grown sick of iced lemongrass towels, plinky-plonky pan pipes and dippy, overly demure masseurs who five minutes ago were probably struggling manicurists, but, again, the attention to detail here is rigorous. You're encouraged to take your coconut oil and detoxification juice like a man and God help you if you don't. The spa is also so big you could be forgiven for thinking it's actually a resort in its own right – or at least deserving of its own postcode.

Take your coconut oil and detox juice like a man

So far so big, but so good. There are 132 villas here, yet even when the place is full it feels practically empty. Sometimes it can even be a little disconcerting, almost as though everyone but you has been invited to a swing-a-ding party of some sort. The restaurants (three – one of which produced the best seafood barbecue I've ever had: an extraordinary array of lobster, king prawns and langoustine) and bars (also three) never appear crowded, and because of the island's luscious greenery (by a rough estimate there are 20,000 palms on the island), people tend to just disappear. As you want them to, because, for many of us, the whole idea of being in the Maldives is not about joining in, not about taking part; it's about evaporating into your own little world. Sure, you might see a family one afternoon going off on an adventure on the bicycles that sit outside every villa, but you'll only see them again in three or four days' time, after they've eventually found their way back.

In the Caribbean these days, it is relatively easy to find fault in luxury hotels, in much the same way it is increasingly easy to find fault with so many Western airlines. Fundamentally, this is because the hospitality industry in most parts of Asia is much more sophisticated than it is elsewhere in the world. In Asia, the customers, whether they're sitting involuntarily on a plane, checking hurriedly into a hotel or aimlessly walking into a bar, are treated with the utmost respect. The US used to be like this, and pockets of the UK too, but while you will still be welcomed with open arms and a small glass of something sticky when you cross the threshold of any small village trattoria in Italy, much of the West has succumbed to a market-driven economy that puts the consumer at the very end of the food chain – and not in a good way. It's easy to make sweeping statements about service these days – just think for a moment about the number of times you have heard people wonder why so many Russians enter the service industry when they obviously have such little aptitude for it – but in the hotel industry, at least, it is still acceptable to talk about national stereotypes (even if we are discouraged to do so by everyone else).

So our levels of expectation when we head east are higher than they've ever been, meaning we tend to be hyper-critical when we eventually get there tired, hungry and needing some professional TLC. Personally, especially in the Maldives, I am rarely, if ever, disappointed, whereas the service at the Shangri-La wasn't so much faultless as seamless.

See, sometimes big really is beautiful.

From £510 per night. Villingili Island, Addu Atoll, the Maldives. 0800 028 3337; +960 689 7888 shangri-la.com/maldives

Top tip

To maximise your time in the sun don't forget to pack: DiorTailoring1 sunglasses, £335. dior.com. Sunleya GE Age Minimizing Global Sun Care SPF 30 by Sisley Paris, £165. sisley-paris.com. Plane Remedy by Jet Candy, £12.99. At Helios. helios.co.uk

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+ **Mark Hix** shakes up a spirit of the age p.162 **Jennifer Bradly** visits three vegetarian hotspots p.163 **Eleanor Halls** stays late for cocktails at Hovarda p.164

Salt-baked celeriac with enoki and whey, from the seasonal menu of returned London pop-up Roganic

GQ Taste

Taking the temperature of Britain's hottest kitchens

EDITED BY **Paul Henderson & Bill Prince**

The Mark Hix Negroni is mixed with only British liqueurs

Ingredients (serves two)

50ml Gin

50ml Red vermouth

50ml Sacred Rosehip Cup

Slice of apple or twist of orange peel

Method

Pour all the ingredients into a mixing glass and top up with ice.

Stir for 15 seconds.

Strain into a tumbler glass over an ice sphere.

Serve with an apple slice or orange twist.

The Cocktail

Negroni by Mark Hix

Put a very British twist on a classic Florentine mix

Although I was always rather partial to hard-core cocktails, I discovered the Negroni quite late on... well, ten years ago or so. I never really liked its medicinal flavour until one night in The Groucho Club when I finally bit the bullet. Since that night, it's been my cocktail of choice. My bar staff even shove one in my hand on arrival at Mark's Bar when they can see *that* look in my eyes and danger ahead.

It's everywhere now, of course, and on all good go-to cocktail bar menus. It also has a great backstory, starting its life in Florence in 1919 when Count Camillo Negroni invented it by asking bartender Fosco Scarselli to boost up his favourite cocktail – the somewhat tamer Americano – by adding gin rather than the normal soda water. Scarselli also swapped the Americano's typical lemon garnish for a twist of orange to stand it apart visually on the bar and to add a little fruitiness to the potent mix.

The Negroni suits my kitchen's "no more than three ingredients on the plate" rule. I like to serve the drink with a big ice sphere (you can buy moulds online), as I've found this technique doesn't dilute the drink too much (like a quick stir on ice in a Martini).

To be honest, it doesn't really matter what gin you use, but my aim was to create a full British Negroni. Thanks to Ian Hart's London distillery, Sacred Gin, which has developed a vermouth and a rosehip liqueur, my mission has been accomplished. Orange peel will do, but for an authentic British flourish, opt for an apple slice.

Photograph **Chris Hoare** Illustration **Joe McKendry**

The Pub

The Butcher's Tap Marlow

Tom Kerridge's chop-shop drinking den steps up to the block

Rather than just bemoaning the decline of high-street butchers and traditional pubs, Tom Kerridge has done something about it and, ingeniously, combined the two.

At The Butcher's Tap, which opened late last year, you'll find Hereford-cross Aberdeen Angus slabs dry-ageing in the windows and cast-iron mincers adorning the walls. In the chiller, there's Packington corn-fed chicken; game from West Wycombe Estate; and strings of sausages, made in-house. It's all locally sourced and butchered on-site by long-time Kerridge collaborator Andy Cook. He tells *GQ* that it's the forgotten cuts often overlooked by the supermarkets, such as Jacob's ladder, ox cheek and flank, that draw in the locals.

The no-frills pub is in the same room. There's sport on TV, local beers, such as Rebellion Smuggler (*£4*), on draught and a simple menu, including a fiery hot dog smothered with pulled pork and pickled chillies (*£7.50*) and hot sausage rolls (*£3.50*), served until they're sold out. The daily evening special (*£7.50*) – Irish stew, stuffed Yorkshire puddings, pork ribs – is always meaty. Jennifer Bradly

● 15 Spittal Street, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 3HJ. thebutcherstap.co.uk

Tom Kerridge's butcher specialises in cuts rarely found in supermarkets

Ghost Notes' lineup spans live music and local DJs

The Club

Ghost Notes

South London's dine/dance haunt

Much has changed since 2011, when Peckham's postcode wars dominated the news and the only people out on the street at night were local gangs. Now, with the opening of seven-floor social hub Peckham Levels, SE15 is giving E1 a run for its money. And it's all about level five...

What's on level five? Ghost Notes, a nightclub hosting a weekly programme of live music and local DJs, including in-house residents SE Discotheque.

But why does it look like a restaurant? Ah, that would be Wild Flower, the delicious vegan restaurant serving coconut dal and organic (read: hangover-free) wine. But don't worry, there's a dance floor beyond the tables.

But I love meat! Then swing around the corner and take your pick from chicken wings, duck burgers, chips and Chinese in the giant, hot-pink food hall.

What time should I come back and dance? At 10pm. Yes, it's early, but the club shuts at 1am (don't pretend you didn't just sigh with relief).

How does one dress 'Peckham'? You dress Shoreditch. **Eleanor Halls**

● **Peckham Levels, Floor 5, 95a Rye Lane, London SE15. ghostnotes.co.uk**

The Bottle

Fair gin

Enter into the spirit of ethical consumption

The content of a bottle of spirit has never been more important. The liquid used to play second fiddle to the brand, but no more. Now you can expect to know where your whisky or gin is made, the exact production process and the story behind your drink. Alexandre Koiransky has gone one step further to ensure that the components of his Fair spirits are Fairtrade, guaranteeing the best deal for the growers and farmers at the heart of production. "We buy our ingredients directly from the farmers. We pay a higher price than the market so workers can ensure their independence as well as their growth. We are faithful to them, pay them with good terms and give them viability for the future."

He believes the spirits industry is the perfect place to establish fairer practices. "In a world where 15 countries own 85 per cent of the world's wealth, it is our responsibility to create innovative and alternative ways of doing business." The Fair gin is a delicate and elegant take on the spirit, with light hints of citrus and spice and a freshness that makes it best served in a Martini or a simple short cocktail. When a fair deal tastes this good, there's really no excuse. Amy Matthews *£32. At fair-drinks.com*

The Roundup

+ Herbivorous!

Three destinations that master meat-free menus

Rosa's Thai Veggie

48 Dean Street, London W1. 020 7494 1638. rosasthaicafe.com

The setup: Clocking the surge in demand for meat-free dishes, the Soho outpost of London stalwart Rosa's Thai Cafe is fully vegetarian until April – and possibly beyond.

Eat this: Transport your mouth straight to Thailand with a plate of Drunken Noodles (*£9.50*) – spicy rice noodles stir-fried with vegetables and Thai herbs, so-called as it's perfect for before or after a big night out.

Drink this: The usual Rosa's Thai drinks menu includes several veggie wines – but we'd still opt for a bottle of Chang beer (*£4*).

Rosa's Thai Cafe: The Vegetarian Cookbook (Mitchell Beazley, £20) is out in June.

Wulf & Lamb

243 Pavilion Road, London SW1. 020 3948 5999. wulfandlamb.com

The setup: On a smart mews behind Sloane Square is a welcome home for the vegan "fast-casual" powerhouse, with comfort food such as burgers, burritos and chilies all dodging meat, eggs and dairy.

Eat this: The plant-based mac'n'cheese (*£5.95*) has set the vegan world alight. It's baked in cashew cream with nutritional yeast, mustard, garlic and turmeric, and topped with bubbling vegan cheese.

Drink this: The vegan 2013 Finca Las Moras Black Label Cabernet Cabernet Reserve (*£9.50 a glass*) has spicy aromas of green pepper, blackberry fruits and dark chocolate.

Ceremony

131 Fortess Road, London NW5. 020 3302 4242. ceremonyrestaurant.london

The setup: This tiny Tufnell Park restaurant may be vegetarian, but it's still heartily indulgent (this translates to butter, soft cheeses and booze – and not a sad cube of tofu to be found). Vegetables and herbs are plucked straight from the private garden and no children are allowed in here after 7pm. Happy days.

Eat this: Start with buttery polenta, wild mushrooms and a crispy duck egg (*£9.50*) before a sweet-potato curry with coconut and fragrant biryani rice (*£15*).

Drink this: The Black-hatten mixes Hennessy VS, coffee-infused Cocchi Torino, Rubino and cassis bitters (*£9*). **JB**

Hovarda's Aegean-inspired cocktail bar

The Bar

Hovarda

We call it a night with the other young Turks at Soho's freshest cocktail joint

Hell hath no fury like guests of new Aegean-inspired Soho bar and restaurant Hovarda who, after spending approximately five hours having the best night of their lives, are booted from the premises as soon as the clock strikes 1.30am. The staff even turn on the lights to make the point: please, go home. An average night at Hovarda starts at 8pm, snacking delicately on courgette fritters, wood-fired artichokes and salty pitta, alongside a glass of Sancerre rosé upstairs on one of the beautiful red velvet banquettes flanking the decks. Come 10pm, it's time for Meraki Mules (Ketel One Vodka, Mastiha, grapefruit and tonic) and Yuzu Margaritas (Patrón tequila, yuzu, fresh lime juice and agave) as the DJ – swathed in layers of black and wearing a large fedora – spins world house and well-heeled millennials start trance dancing. Come 11pm, the whole bar is a dance floor. Come 12am, it's Mastiha shots with the owners. Come 1am, it's... blurry. This is the kind of bar you could lose yourself in, if it stayed open any later. Problem is, the owners are working on it. EH

● 36-40 Rupert Street, London W1. 020 3019 3460. hovarda.london

Small Bites

+ Where we've been eating this month...

Schmaltz

Sublime French chicken "fast food", served from a bespoke mobile kitchen clad in Timorous Beasties dandelion print.

Standout dish: The Chicken Schmaltz sandwich, served with crispy skin and pickled fennel.

Pitch 4, Broadgate Circle, London EC2. 020 8968 0202. schmaltzlondon.com

Pastaio

Outstanding handmade pasta served on communal tables in Steve Parle's colourful Tom Dixon-designed restaurant.

Standout dish: Start with the clams and mussels in butter, followed by the pheasant, rabbit and pork agnoli.

19 Ganton Street, London W1. pastaio.london

Kettner's Townhouse

Soho House Group reanimates a London stalwart with a spacious bar and all-day dining menu inspired by founder Augustus Kettner, chef to Napoleon III.

Standout dish: Wild sea bass and samphire with sauce vierge.

29 Romilly Street, London W1. 020 7734 5650. kettnerstownhouse.com

The Restaurant

Roganic

With a menu set by mother nature, the daddy of farm-to-table is back

When Simon Rogan ended his partnership with Claridge's a year ago, he left Fera in the hands of his protégé, Matt Starling, and Londoners without one of their finest chefs. But while Rogan's two Michelin-starred L'Enclume continued to thrive in the Lake District, he opened Aulis London, an experimental development kitchen and chef's table in Soho, and negotiated the relaunch of Roganic, his celebrated Marylebone pop-up that had popped down in 2013. Finally, Rogan is back in town – this time permanently.

Roganic, under head chef Oliver Marlow, now brings a taste of L'Enclume to the capital – many of the ingredients are supplied by Rogan's own Cumbrian farm. This is no dine-and-dash experience. There's no menu, for a start: your meal (from £40 for lunch) is so fresh it's at the mercy of the crops, the seasons and the whim of the chef. On request, they will slip you a wax-sealed envelope listing your dishes, but peeping is cheating. It's more fun, you'll discover, for the staff to play their part in introducing each plate. From the raw bavette rendered smoky with coal oil to the nuggets of salt-baked celeriac with spindly enoki, each tiny course is best savoured as a beautiful surprise. **JB**

● 5-7 Blandford Street, London W1. 020 3370 6260. roganic.uk

The Hotel

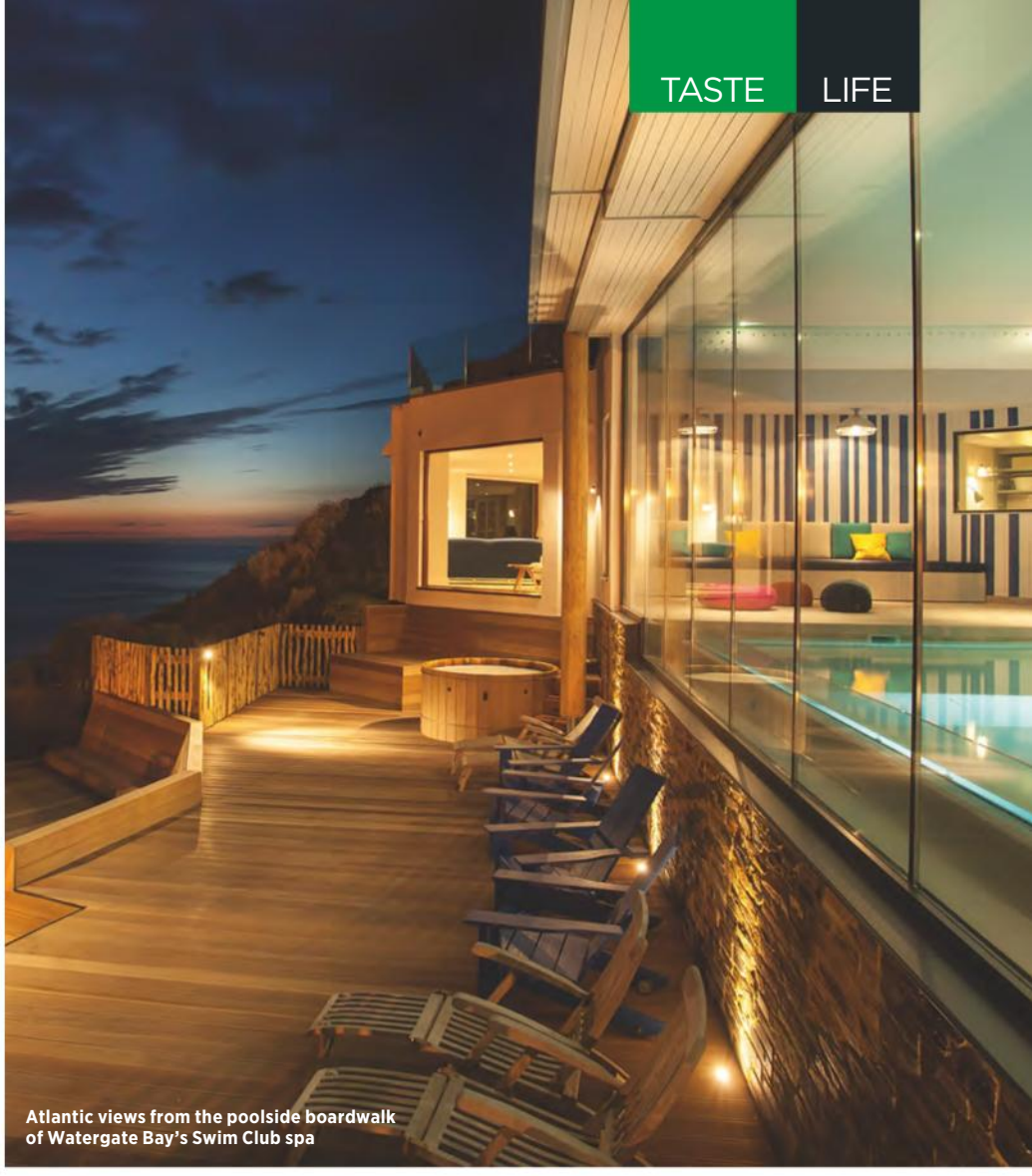
Watergate Bay
Cornwall

Visit the designer 'beach hut' that's making waves in England's surf capital

When the hotel of the month has an address that reads "On The Beach", it tells you all you need to know about where you are staying. On the edge of one of Cornwall's best surf spots, Watergate Bay is a two-mile stretch of very occasionally sun-drenched sand between Newquay and Padstow, and this well-known hotel is as chilled and contemporary as anywhere from here to Formentera.

With interior design provided by the team behind Soho House, you'll find open-plan living that suggests a Nordic ski resort-on-sea. The best rooms are in the Ocean Wing, which have jaw-dropping sea views. If you can't get one of those, you can do your North Atlantic sightseeing from the two restaurants (Zacry's and The Living Space) or the even-closer-to-the-ocean Beach Hut café bar. All three offer visitors a viable alternative to the neighbourhood branch of Jamie Oliver's Fifteen.

If you are inspired by the setting, the hotel runs an Extreme Academy for surf lessons and equipment hire, but for more gentle appreciation of the Bay there is a stunning infinity pool and a Canadian-style hot tub. Either way, life's a beach. **PH**



Atlantic views from the poolside boardwalk of Watergate Bay's Swim Club spa

● Double rooms from £185. Watergate Bay Hotel, On The Beach, Watergate Bay, Cornwall TR8 4AA. 01637 860543. watergatebay.co.uk

The Book

Breakfast Is Served

How to travel the world before leaving the house

By uniting their passion for food and mornings, Laura Ascari and Elisa Paganelli have created the ultimate breakfast cookbook. Featuring recipes from countries as far afield as Nigeria (their kunun gyada, a mixture of short grain rice and tamarind juice, is the new rice pudding) and Alaska (turns out we should all be baking our porridge), you can travel the world in your kitchen, sampling breakfast (and brunch) from exotic destinations. From oaty Australian Anzac biscuits to deliciously dark German pumpernickel, this is the book that might stop you skipping breakfast. **Melina Zachariou**

● Breakfast Is Served (Mitchell Beazley, £12.99) by Laura Ascari and Elisa Paganelli is out now.

Tostada

(serves two to four)

Ingredients

2 fresh tomatoes

1 garlic clove

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Dried oregano

Salt

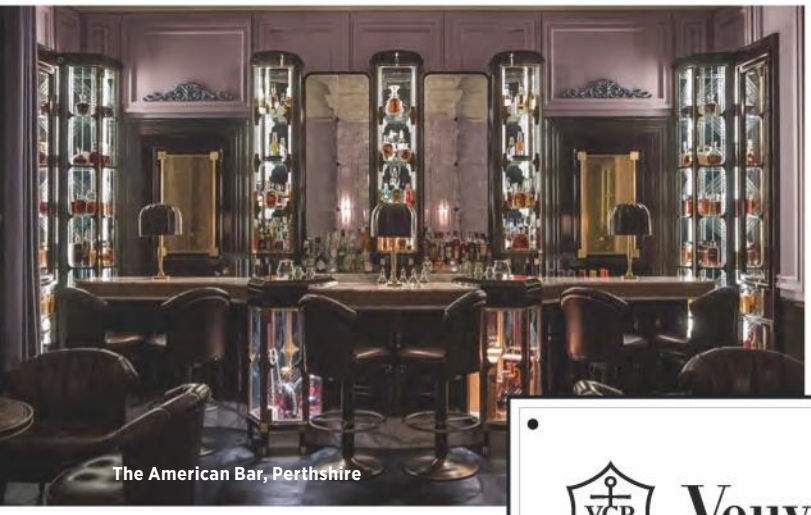
2-4 slices of white bread

4 slices of Serrano ham, chopped

Method

First prepare the sauce. Wash the tomatoes and peel the garlic clove. Grate the tomatoes and garlic to make a coarse purée. Add 1 tbsp of the oil and oregano and salt to taste.

Toast the bread slices, then drizzle them with the remaining oil. Spread the tomato sauce over them and top with the Spanish dry-cured ham.



The American Bar, Perthshire

Langoustines with Marie Rose sauce at Westerns Laundry, London

Veuve Clicquot

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BRITISH GQ

FOOD & DRINK AWARDS 2018

The Ned, London

Swift, London

Welcome, tastemakers, to the fourth annual *GQ* Food & Drink Awards, presented by Veuve Clicquot. You supped and sampled the length and breadth of Britain to set this shortlist and now the nation's most discerning diners are preparing to select this year's champions – from chefs of ambition and precision to the front-of-house heroes who define and refine every evening out, plus, for the first time, our breakthrough restaurant of the year. Confirm your reservation at London's most exclusive table and watch for our winners in the June issue.

BEST
Restaurant

- **Westerns Laundry** (LONDON) *westernslaundry.com*
- **Core by Clare Smyth** (LONDON) *corebyclaresmyth.com*
- **Native** (LONDON) *eatnative.co.uk*
- **The Barbary** (LONDON) *thebarbary.co.uk*
- **The Spanish Butcher** (GLASGOW) *spanishbutcher.com*

Belvedere Best Bar

- **Black Rock/The Devil's Darling** (LONDON) *napoleon-hotel.com*
- **Swift** (LONDON) *barswift.com*
- **Mint Gun Club** (LONDON) *onesour.com*
- **The American Bar** (PERTHSHIRE) *gleneagles.com*
- **Punch Room** (LONDON) *editionhotels.com*

BEST
Sommelier

- **Patrick Frawley at Restaurant Story** (LONDON) *restaurantstory.co.uk*
- **Christopher Lecoufle at Les 110 De Taillevent** (LONDON) *les-110-taillevent-london.com*
- **Sonal Clare at Purnell's** (BIRMINGHAM) *purnellsrestaurant.com*
- **Arnaud Goubet at Belmond Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons** (OXFORDSHIRE) *belmond.com*
- **Alastair England at Zuma Group** *zumarestaurant.com*

BEST
Chef

- **Andrew Wong at A Wong** (LONDON) *awong.co.uk*
- **Anne-Sophie Pic at La Dame De Pic** (LONDON) *fourseasons.com*
- **Tom Sellers at Restaurant Story** (LONDON) *restaurantstory.co.uk*
- **Paul Ainsworth at No6** (PADSTOW) *paul-ainsworth.co.uk*
- **Mitsuhiro Araki at The Araki** (LONDON) *the-araki.com*

BEST
Restaurateur

- **Ben Chapman of Smoking Goat** (LONDON) *smokinggoatbar.com*
- **Karam, Sunaina and Jyotin Sethi of JKS Restaurants** *jksrestaurants.com*
- **Jeremy Roberts of Living Ventures** *livingventures.com*
- **Zoë and Leo Paskin of The Palomar** (LONDON) *thepalomar.co.uk*
- **Tom Kerridge** *tomkerridge.com*

BEST
Hotel

- **Lympstone Manor** (EXMOUTH) *lympstonemanor.co.uk*
- **Nobu** (LONDON) *nobuhotelshoreditch.com*
- **The Ned** (LONDON) *thened.com*
- **The Mandrake** (LONDON) *themandrake.com*

Photograph Getty Images

The Spanish Butcher, Glasgow

• **Dakota** (LEEDS)
leeds.dakotahotels.co.uk

BEST
Interior
• **Ichibuns** (LONDON)
ichibuns.com
• **Sketch** (LONDON)
sketch.london
• **Nine Lives** (LONDON)
ninelivesbar.com
• **Isabel** (LONDON)
isabelw1.london
• **Bob Bob Ricard** (LONDON)
bobbobricard.com

BEST
Front of House
• **David Galetti at Mere** (LONDON)
mere-restaurant.com
• **Joe Paulinski at Restaurant Story** (LONDON)
restaurantstory.co.uk
• **Ed Thaw at Ellory** (LONDON)
ellorylondon.com
• **Sandia Chang at Bubbledogs** (LONDON) *bubbledogs.co.uk*
• **Daniel Crump at The Oxford Blue** (BERKSHIRE)
oxfordbluepub.co.uk

BEST
Overall Experience
• **Carousel** (LONDON)
carousel-london.com
• **Swingers** (LONDON)
swingersldn.com
• **L'Enclume** (CUMBRIA)
lenclume.co.uk
• **The Man Behind The Curtain** (LEEDS)
themanbehindthecurtain.co.uk
• **The Woodspeen** (BERKSHIRE)
thewoodspeen.com

BEST
Breakthrough
• **Ceremony** (LONDON)
ceremonyrestaurant.london
• **The Frog** (LONDON)
thefrogrestaurant.com
• **Smoke & Salt in Pop Brixton** (LONDON)
smokeandsalt.com
• **Moor Hall** (LANCASHIRE)
moorhall.com
• **108 Garage** (LONDON)
108garage.com

BEST
Pub
• **The Duck Inn** (NORFOLK)
duckinn.co.uk
• **The Oxford Blue** (BERKSHIRE)
oxfordbluepub.co.uk
• **The Hunworth Bell** (NORFOLK)
hunworthbell.co.uk
• **The King's Arms** (OXFORDSHIRE)
kingshotelwoodstock.co.uk
• **The Fuzzy Duck** (WARWICKSHIRE)
fuzzyduckarmscote.com

Veuve Clicquot Innovator Award
• **Untitled** (LONDON)
untitled-bar.com
• **Cook For Syria** (LONDON)
cookforsyria.com
• **Dan Barber at wastED** (LONDON)*wastedlondon.com*
• **Ikoyi** (LONDON)
ikoyilondon.com
• **Soho House Group**
sohohouse.com

Lifetime Achievement
To be announced on the night.

THE JUDGES

Introducing *GQ*'s panel of experts: leaders in the fields of food, drink, journalism, hospitality and interiors. These good men and women will decide the true winners...

Richard Corrigan
Richard Corrigan's culinary career spans several years in the Netherlands, a stint as head chef of Mulligan's in Mayfair and gaining his first Michelin star as head chef of Fulham Road in 1994. He has cooked for the Queen twice and been crowned a winner of *Great British Menu* no fewer than three times.

Ryan Chetiyawardana
Known in mixology circles as Mr Lyan (a childhood nickname), Ryan Chetiyawardana has spent four years wowing Londoners with Super Lyan and Dandelyan's genius cocktail menus. He has won many awards, including Best International Bartender at the 2015 Spirited Awards.

Nieves Barragán Mohacho
After nine years heading up the kitchens for Fino and Barrafina (earning the Soho branch a Michelin star en route), Nieves Barragán Mohacho, one of the best tapas chefs in the UK, has recently opened her highly anticipated first personal venture, Sabor.

Mark Hix
Chef, restaurateur and food writer Mark Hix is known for his original take on British gastronomy. After 17 years as chef director at Caprice Holdings, he left to open his own restaurant, Hix Oyster & Chop House, in 2008. Now, he has seven restaurants, showcasing the best of British ingredients.

Bertrand Steip
Bertrand Steip has enjoyed a celebrated career in the luxury drinks industry. After nearly three decades with Moët Hennessy, in 2010 he became managing director of the company's UK arm, which looks after prestigious brands including Belvedere, Glenmorangie and Veuve Clicquot.

Dylan Jones
Since Dylan Jones became Editor of *GQ* in 1999, the magazine has won 67 awards. Jones has also penned multiple books on subjects as diverse as music and politics, been awarded an OBE, is chairman of London Fashion Week Men's and a director of the British Fashion Council.

Oliver Peyton
Oliver Peyton has been a fixture on the London food scene since he opened his first restaurant, Atlantic Bar & Grill, in the Nineties. In addition to judging *Great British Menu* since it started in 2006, Peyton is a founder and restaurateur of noted hospitality group Peyton And Byrne.

Tara Bernerd
Founder of Tara Bernerd & Partners, designer Tara Bernerd is a maven of luxury interior design. Her practice has worked on numerous high-end hospitality projects, from the multimillion-pound redesign of New York's Sixty Soho hotel to restoring The Principal London to its former glory.

Matt Hobbs
Rising through the ranks from cutting bread in The Ivy in 1994 to managing the likes of Soho House New York and Annabel's, Matt Hobbs has learnt his trade from master restaurateurs, and he has been managing director of the famed Groucho Club since 2010. GQ

WHEN NAOMI MET SKEPTA

STORY BY **Eleanor Halls** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **An Le** STYLING BY **Jenke Ahmed**

She's commanded the catwalks while he's conquered the charts, but for model, activist and businesswoman NAOMI CAMPBELL and breakthrough grime artist SKEPTA, the roads to success were barricaded by racism and abuse of power. Here, in an exclusive interview and cover shoot, we compere this conversation between two urgent voices of Black Britain, in an age where old prejudices are still fighting back

‘You say I can’t have it? Well, I’m going to get it another way’

Naomi Campbell

Skepta wears trousers by **Commes Des Garçons**, £455. At Dover Street Market. doverstreetmarket.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

Naomi wears briefs by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

‘People feel they can show their ignorance because the leader of the free world is showing his’

Naomi Campbell

All rise...

Naomi Campbell walks into the Premier Suite of La Réserve Hotel Paris wearing white underwear and pin-sharp black stilettos. She's late – two hours and ten minutes – but then if she wasn't you'd be disappointed, wouldn't you? It's like Keith Richards without a Marlboro Red. Or Salt Bae without sirloin. Anyway, you know what they say about good things.

What we're here for is more than just a conversation: it's a summit, a call to action. Supermodel Naomi Campbell and British grime artist Skepta – close friends, cultural icons and powerful voices at a time of socio-political tumult – have agreed to go heavy for British *GQ*. From #OscarsSoWhite to #GrammysSoMale, from Harvey Weinstein to #MeToo, from Donald Trump to Brexit, it's all on the table. This year, after all, is about accountability.

Yet, before we begin, Campbell's antennae are tingling: she is questioning the suitability of her chosen attire for what is due to be an hour-long filmed interview. "I can't have all these people staring at me," she says, abruptly. "They'll all have to go. And surely we're not talking on this sofa." It wasn't a question. Campbell's South London accent is authoritative; her green eyes flash like the light at the end of Daisy Buchanan's dock. This is a warning. All the cameras are facing said sofa, brown and hideous, itself now seemingly sagging with shame. "No," replies the 47-year-old to the room's stony silence. "Absolutely not."

Sensing the atmosphere, the model breaks the static with a giggle: "Who do I think I am, bossing everyone around in my underwear?" Then, Naomi Campbell, one of the world's most recognisable women, does what she's able to do so effortlessly: she realigns the vibe. How? By introducing herself. "Hiiiii," she says slowly, beaming benevolently at each of the blanched faces lining the room's perimeter. She puts a jewelled hand gently to her chest: "I'm Naomi."

Enter Joseph Junior Adenuga, the inked-up grime artist better known as Skepta. Shouldering an enormous next-season Moncler puffer jacket, with a black cap and black hood, Skepta threatens to knock over anything in his path. Tottenham-raised, the 35-year-old is one of London's most respected musicians. Along with Wiley and Dizzee Rascal, Skepta is one of the forerunners of the capital's grime scene – Britain's 140-bpm answer to American rap.

Since grime's second wave went from pirate radio to official charts with "German Whip" by Meridian Dan in 2014, reaching its commercial peak last year (and success in the US), Skepta's name now comes with a string of accolades: the 2016 Mercury Prize for his latest album, *Konnichiwa;* three nominations and a standout performance at last year's Brit Awards, as well as the 2017 Ivor Novello award for Songwriter Of The Year. Skepta is to London what Jay-Z is to New York: a curator of the city's musical identity and a maverick figurehead, unafraid to stand up and stand out.

Skepta and Campbell met for the first time in December 2016, at the British Fashion Awards at the Royal Albert Hall. Alongside now-*Vogue* editor Edward Enninful, Skepta honoured Jaden and Willow Smith as New Fashion Icons, while Campbell presented designer Sarah Burton from Alexander McQueen with the British Brand Award. Introduced by Enninful, himself a longtime friend and collaborator of Campbell, the pair took Polaroids with Kate Moss before going on to the afterparty together.

Campbell still has the photo, and a series of Instagram images with love-heart emojis chronicle the friendship that blossomed, which, this year, took a professional turn. For the launch of Skepta's new underwear line as part of his Mains collection, he asked Campbell to collaborate. Specifically: to pose only in a pair of Mains briefs, in his naked embrace, for a series of loving and intimate photographs. The outstanding results can be seen here.

Rumours have emerged more recently that the pair are secretly dating. Like the petulant, reactionary infant that it can be, the internet scoffed: a 35-year-old grime MC who has too much "integrity" to even selfie with a fan and the 47-year-old supermodel who commands the limelight like Jackie Onassis?

Yet, why sneer? What's so unbelievable about these two strong, powerful voices falling for one another, physically, psychologically and, yes, professionally? With careers spanning music and fashion, they have much in common and a cause that binds. They have had to break down walls of habit and ignorance. They have had to shout across echo chambers to be heard. Both black, they have spent years campaigning against the same prejudices. Because of the colour of their skin, both have had to work twice as hard to get to the top, yet have subsequently dominated industries that have historically excluded them.

The interview begins. But first, Skepta, now dressed in a bathrobe to suit Campbell's stipulated "morning after" theme, wants some water. He asks for a bottle of Evian, but Campbell, now in a black slip dress, is not happy. "Lemon water is much better for you," she says, disapprovingly, stopping him opening the bottle. "He'll have the lemon water," she tells the agent on hand. Skepta, without so much as flinching, obeys. Campbell finally looks content. Now, it's time to talk. ››

Skepta wears jeans by **Officine Générale**, £292. officinegenerale.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

Naomi wears boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

GQ: Two black figureheads coming together in this way: how significant a moment is this?

Naomi Campbell: Yes, it's great that we're a black man and a black woman on the cover of British *GQ* in 2018. This is the new way; this is what it should be and how it should stay. We're not a trend. And this year, if you look at fashion ad campaigns, there's a person of colour in every campaign – and that's a big deal. First you put the black models in the shows, and we're counting at the end. But then, where are the ad campaigns? They do the show but they can't do the ads? However, this season will be the first time so many women of colour will star in major brand campaigns. What's left to do now is [the] beauty [industry]. But this is not an attack – we're just making you aware. Sometimes, people are so involved in their business that they've got no idea what the casting person is doing. So you have to give them a little nudge and say, "This is just a friendly reminder." Then after a few friendly reminders, yes, it's more of a statement.

GQ: How important are these big media statements concerning colour: this magazine cover, the 2017 all-black Pirelli calendar, the *Black Panther* film?

NC: I didn't work all these years to go backwards. I've seen so many people sacrifice their lives: Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela... Now, more than ever, when I do a job, I don't care about fame. I think, "What does it do for my people?" We've had to make these statements to remind you when you're not being diverse. But when you choose, you should make your decision with diversity and balance.

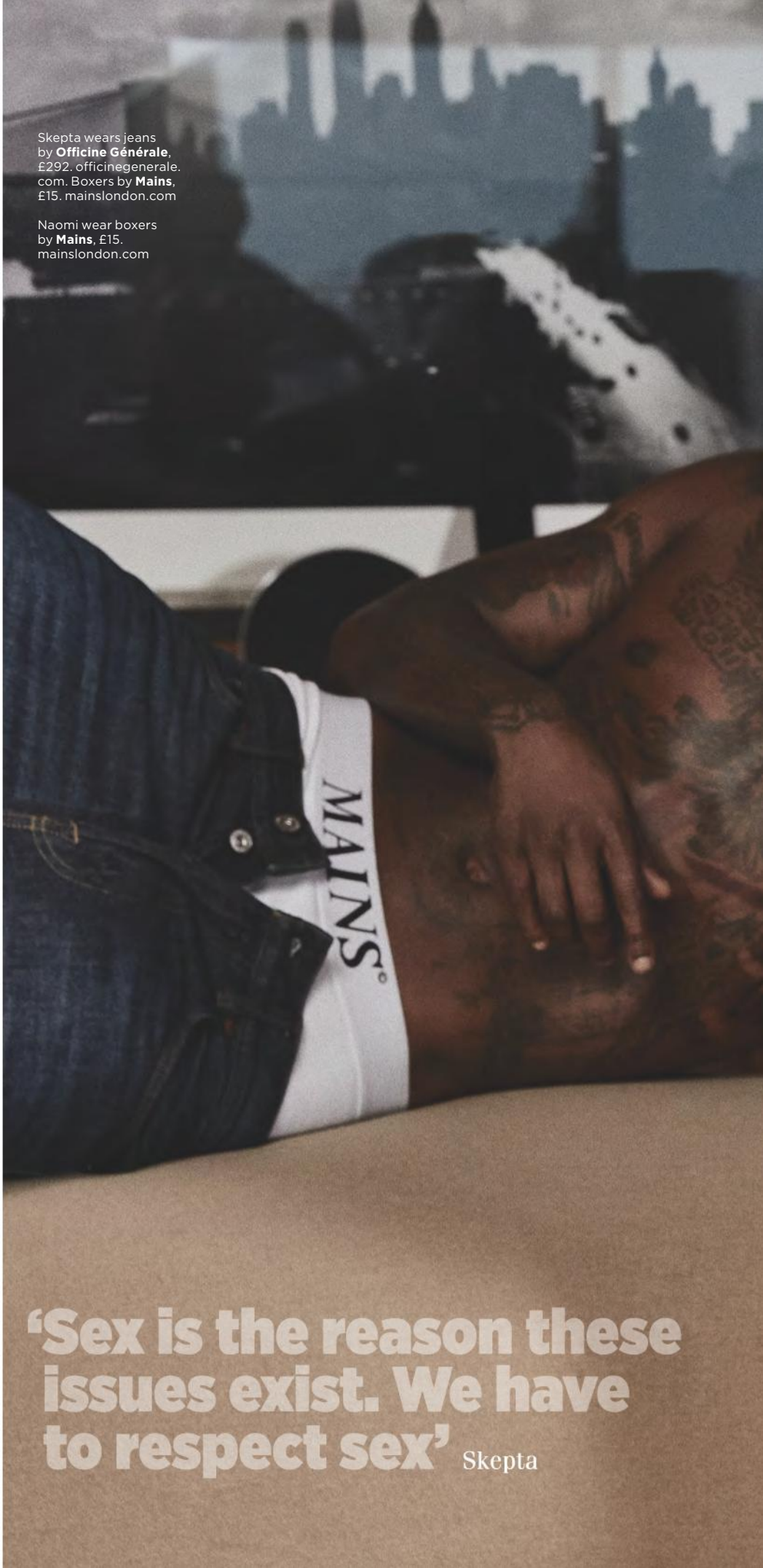
Skepta: These magazines are such big deals because they shape how society sees beauty. So thank you to everybody who helped us get here and thank you for acknowledging us. But we're still always going to do us. I don't want to make a big thing out of things like this. It's supposed to be like this. But I understand that, like an arm wrestle, there's a forceful fight over on one side before it goes over to the other side. That's what's happening and I just hope it balances out, because the pressure isn't good for anyone.

GQ: There have been steps forward with regards to diversity, but last year we also saw some steps back...

NC: I don't know what to say. Because that man made a statement the other day that's just unheard of, so... I don't know what to say. I see it backwards right now.

GQ: Are you talking about Trump calling immigrants' origins "shithole countries"?

NC: Yes. It's disgraceful. It's disgusting. Where is the etiquette? Things are tense and they're tense worldwide. Ignorant people now feel they can come out and openly show their ignorance because the leader of the free world is showing his. »

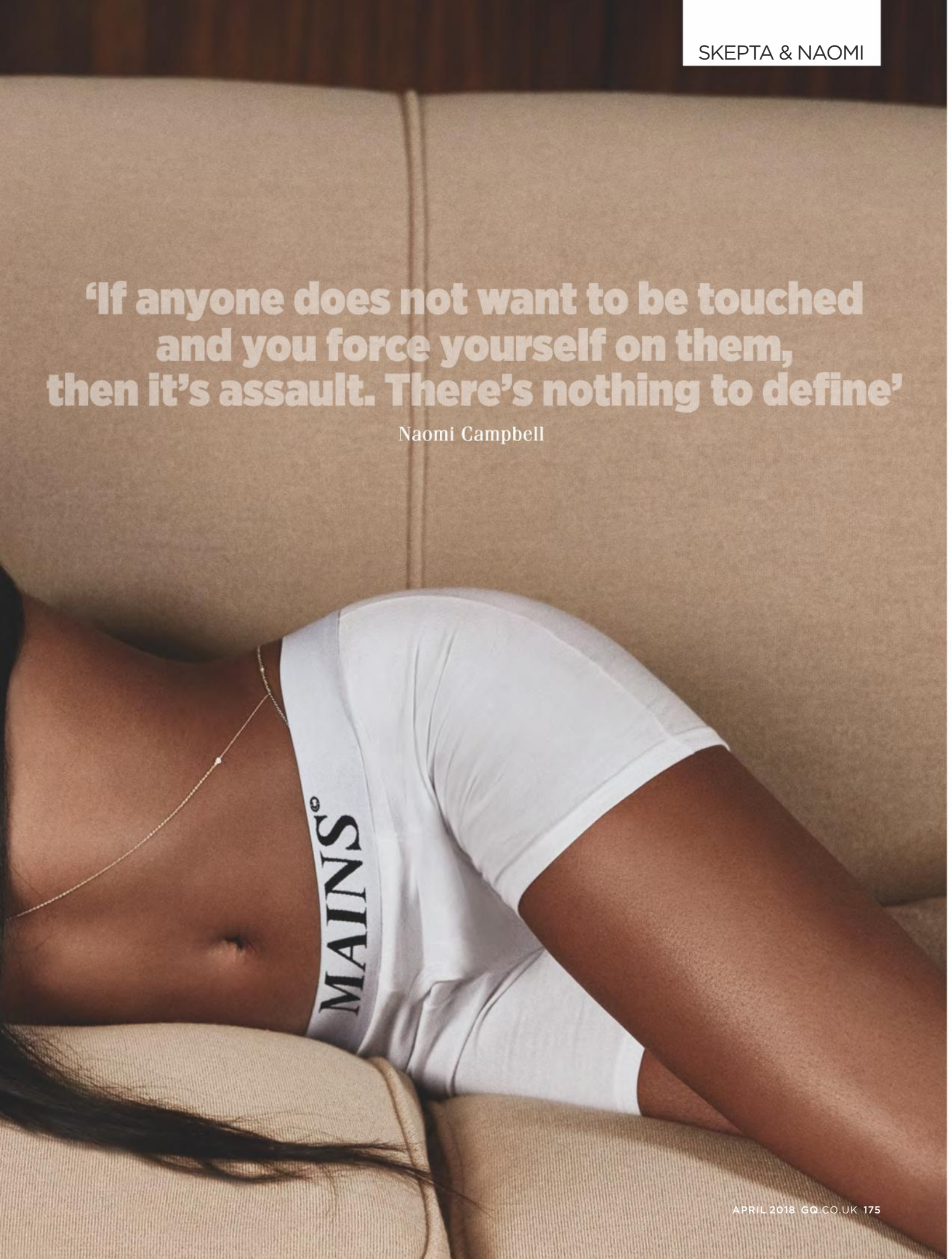


Skepta wears jeans by **Officine Générale**, £292. officinegenerale.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

Naomi wear boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com

'Sex is the reason these issues exist. We have to respect sex' Skepta

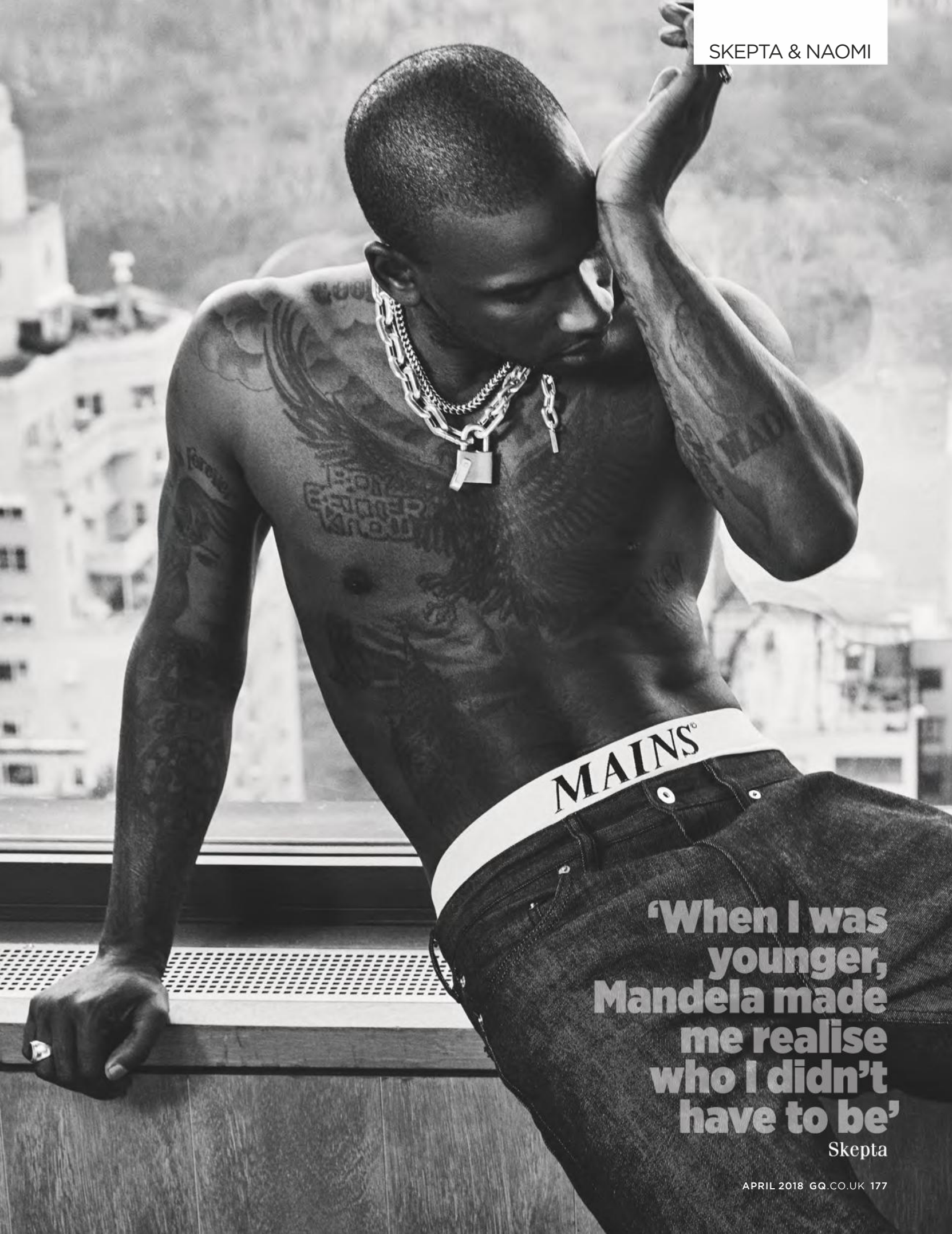
Boxers by **Mains**, £15, mainslondon.com



‘If anyone does not want to be touched and you force yourself on them, then it’s assault. There’s nothing to define’

Naomi Campbell

Skepta wears trousers by **Commes Des Garçons**, £455. At Dover Street Market. doverstreetmarket.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com. Naomi wears briefs by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com. Right: Skepta wears jeans by **Officine Générale**, £292. officinegenerale.com. Boxers by **Mains**, £15. mainslondon.com



‘When I was younger, Mandela made me realise who I didn’t have to be’
Skepta

S: [*Laughs.*] I shouldn't laugh, but with the presidents and people we have in power, who am I to take it seriously? This is hilarious. This is *The Sims*. This is a game of *The Sims*.
NC: They should have thought of that before. It was a game when they were voting. They should have really been thinking, "What are we doing?" Now this is the consequence.
S: We don't care. We're just in a world of likes and followers and if someone can say the best things and get the most followers and the most attention, then they're going to get the most votes.
GQ: How do you react when people are racially ignorant to you personally?
NC: I don't react openly. I go back and get what I want. You say I can't have it? Well, I'm going to get it another way. I've never used it as an excuse to fall down on as a victim. It drove me.
S: Everyone knows their wrong from right, so when people are being racist they know they're being ignorant. I don't engage with ignorance. My mother always told me, "Never argue with a fool, because from afar you can't tell who's who." I keep that in my head. I understand they've got a long way to travel.
NC: I remember getting the Blue Train with President Mandela in my twenties and at each station we would get off and greet each township. But then I remember realising it wasn't everybody who loved Grandad [Campbell often refers to Mandela as her Grandad]. It wasn't everybody who wanted him to be free. I heard people say horrible things and when we got back on the train, he said to me, "What's wrong?" "Nothing," I said. And he said, "What did you hear?"
S: Did you stay at [Mandela's] house?
NC: I stayed at his house.
S: Did you cook?
NC: No, I didn't cook. He had cooks.
S: I would have stayed there all the time, you know? He would have had to tell me to leave.
NC: Sometimes he would call me up and he'd be like…
S: Was there Wi-Fi?
NC: He would call and be like, "There's a…"
S: Was there Wi-Fi?
NC: I don't think so back then. I used to have a Nokia Ericsson. It wasn't like it is now.
S: As long as there was Wi-Fi, I would have stayed at Nelson Mandela's house.
GQ: Skepta, what would you have liked to say to Nelson Mandela?
S: He went to the forefront and changed it for black men. There's a lot of pain that we've felt and that we need to churn out. It only takes one man to take himself out of the general mindset of a black man and [the mindset] moves on. When I was younger, he was the one who made me realise who I didn't have to be.
GQ: To talk about someone who couldn't be more different to Nelson Mandela, how much has Harvey Weinstein and the Me Too movement affected you?
NC: You can't say that man's name in the same breath [as Mandela's]. Well, it affected my charity. [Weinstein] hasn't honoured any of the pledges he made last year, which is disgusting. Syrian and refugee children have lost out because he didn't give the money. I stand with all women and with every woman who has been violated by that man.
GQ: Were you surprised by the allegations?
NC: I wasn't surprised at all.
GQ: Had you heard rumours?
NC: He's who he is. It's awful. I don't want to talk about him anymore. I'm done.
GQ: How would you define sexual assault?
NC: If anyone, man or woman, does not want to be touched and you force yourself on them, then it's assault. There's nothing to define. It's wrong, period.
GQ: You don't believe there's a spectrum? Is a touch on the knee sexual assault?
NC: I'm thinking of something more than a touch on the knee when you say the word assault to me. I'm thinking of something that's against the person's will.
S: I think it's crazy that there are guidelines

'With the presidents and people in power… it's like a game of The Sims' Skepta

to "doing right". It's just simple. If someone doesn't feel you like that, then you obviously know. And if they say it to you, then you know anything past that is just wrong.
GQ: Skepta, do you feel you now have to be more careful with what you say and do around women?
S: It's like the arm wrestle: this is a fight back. For a long time, men were just running around taking the piss, but now the internet has given everyone a voice. Artists like Lil Peep – rest in peace – are talking [about these problems] openly now. And what we're realising is that sex is *it*. It's the reason [all these issues] exist. We have to respect sex. For a long time, men weren't respecting women. They weren't understanding mother earth, mother nature, the motherland, all the motherly stuff. And now we are.
GQ: Are you a feminist?
S: I am for feminism. I stand up for women standing up for themselves in the same way I stand up for being black. At one stage, whites were racist to blacks, but now, black rappers are saying stuff like, "White bitch/ she sniff a line" in their songs. But if a white rapper said, "Black bitch", even if it wasn't followed by anything derogatory, even if he then called her "the most beautiful flower", he'd get crucified. I think there's going to be a massive toppling. Women are going to be battering men for a little while now.
GQ: Is there a pressure on men to live up to a certain archetype of masculinity?
S: I watch the National Geographic [Channel] a lot, even without the volume on. I just love watching animals. Because we are animals. Sex is an urge. We want to have sex. But now, people are just going to have to respect sex. If you don't respect [sex] then we're not respecting ourselves. I don't rush into any stuff like that. I've got to get married…
GQ: Have you witnessed abuse of power in the music industry?
S: I've seen it. But now women are understanding their power [in music], just like in every field of entertainment. About three years ago I got a female manager to see what it would be like and she changed our lives. Now, I think you'll find a lot of rappers and artists are getting girl managers. It just makes sense. The guys in my team have learnt a lot from bringing girls in. Some men can't do it, because they're stuck in the past, but others are working it out.
GQ: Can we talk about mental health? Does mental health carry a certain stigma among some black communities?
NC: I don't think there's a stigma.
S: What stigma? Let's have the conversation.
GQ: In a recent BBC documentary [*Being Black, Going Crazy?*] presenter Keith Dube reported on the stigma he found in African communities.
NC: That they don't want to tell their families they've got mental health issues? I don't think we should dwell on this because it's not going to come out right. That's gone too left for me. I don't know how to get my head around it. And without talking about my family…
S: Black. Black. Black! Ah, there are some funny words in the world, man. You say them and… *boom*! It's hilarious. I don't know what's wrong with me. They're only words and you can put whatever meaning you want to them. When I was younger, people would say things and they would control me, but it's bullshit. Even now, we're talking about it… and it's *materialising*. It's becoming something. But I realise you have to talk about it to move past it. **GQ**

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‘I’ve never used racial ignorance as an excuse to fall down on as a victim. It drove me’

Naomi Campbell

Dressing gown by **Handro**, £156. At Selfridges. selfridges.com

Hair Ro Morgan **Makeup** Adam Fleischhauer
Production Victoria Pavon

IT'S TIME TO TALK

Sex, power and consent in a post-Weinstein world

Amid the tidal wave of #MeToo, many men's first instinct has been to stay silent. Much needed to be said, but shouldn't we just shut up and listen? Only that's not how things change. It's no longer a matter of keeping the status quo, turning a blind eye and telling ourselves, hey, we're not the problem. Because be in no doubt, there is a problem, and it's time we all talked...

STORIES BY **Stephanie Boland, Teo van den Broeke, Eleanor Halls, Jonathan Heaf, Justin Myers, John Niven, Olive Pometsey, Chris Stokel-Walker, Amelia Tait**

Why I'm afraid of men

STORY BY

Olive Pometsey

Women have always been wary of strangers, but for one 23-year-old, even the familiar causes alarm

Listen, to apologise, let me get you two girls a drink. What are your names, anyway?" I scrutinise my friend's face to try to work out what she's thinking. Are these guys safe? After all, he'd only drunkenly stumbled against our table: that's not really a serious offence. "Jennifer," she replies casually. Her name isn't Jennifer. Uh oh. What's my name? There's a painful pause until I unconvincingly settle on "Stephanie", which is shortly followed by a roar of laughter from the surrounding men. "Well, I believe her, but you are *not* called Stephanie."

But now I am called Stephanie, that is, if you're an unfamiliar man who approaches me and asks my name. I fumbled during that encounter, but I'm now armed with a fake name, an apparently essential weapon in a world where it seems no man can be trusted. That isn't the only artillery I carry: keys transform into knuckle-dusters as I walk from the tube station to my home at night and my phone's camera app is *en garde* to capture evidence should anything actually happen. That way, if I do get attacked, at least people will believe me. Is this paranoid behaviour? Maybe, but in the midst of the Me Too movement, is it really unwarranted?

I've always known that men can be dangerous and I've always been careful, but post-Weinstein, as more and more men are exposed as sex pests, I've found myself feeling genuinely scared of men. The other day a man smiled at me on the tube, in an almost empty carriage, and I automatically assumed he was going to attack me. On another occasion, the man sitting opposite me looked particularly shifty and anxious, so, naturally, I assumed he was planning something untoward, of which I'd be the victim. I tried to convince myself I was being ridiculous and that he was probably just anxious because he was running late, but I decided to get off and change carriages anyway. You know, just in case. Before, I'd have smiled back or simply ignored any odd behaviour, but now it seems that just as men have been collectively conditioned to objectify women, I've been conditioned to fear them.

Even though an increasing number of women are finding the courage to come forward and talk about their experiences of sexual assault, I can't help but wonder how many are still biting their tongue. I've heard the men around me talk about how the public shaming of Aziz Ansari has made them look back and reflect on their past sexual encounters, but the same can be said for myself. Over the past few months I've realised that, since my teens, I've experienced treatment at the hands of men and boys that is simply not OK. At the time, my friends and I thought these kinds of events were funny and, if anything, embarrassing for the males involved, but looking back now it feels deeply unsettling to properly assess those situations and, despite witnessing other women speak out, I now feel embarrassed discussing it. How many other women are in the same boat? And how many other misogynistic, entitled men are slipping under the radar as a consequence? It's from this sentiment that my fear is born. It feels as though no man can be trusted and, even if someone does *seem* like a decent person, is staying on the same tube carriage for the sake of wanting to believe that there are actually some respectable men in the world really worth the risk?

Keys transform into knuckle-dusters as I walk from the tube station to my home at night

And yet, in trying to stay safe, I realise that I'm potentially overreacting. While I know #NotAllMen is a pretty antifeminist hashtag that rivals #AllLivesMatter for the "Most Unproductive Campaign That Turns Attention Away From The Real Problem" award, I am also fully aware that, actually, not all men should be feared. But now, after so many men, including those I'd previously admired, have been revealed to be false allies, how can I possibly sort the bad guys from the good? It's best just to be suspicious of them all. Just in case.

I'm conflicted, confused and constantly second-guessing myself. In some ways, I almost feel guilty for projecting these feelings onto every man I meet, but then I worry that perhaps this guilt is a product of my inherent desire to people-please, which is itself thanks to the subservient stereotypes of femininity society has fed me from birth. Or worse, maybe I'm just naive. One of the most important things that has come to mainstream attention through the Me Too movement is the way in which many men simply expect women to submit to their own sexual desire, whether that's practised explicitly through aggressive assaults or by means of subtle coercion. Either way, a woman's own feelings and desires are commonly treated with disregard. I don't doubt that the majority of men I meet would never intentionally set out to hurt me, but they certainly might push the boundaries of what is acceptable without even realising it.

Ansari responded to the claims of sexual misconduct made against him by saying, "Everything did seem OK to me..." Basically, he was too focused on his needs being met to actually take the time to consider whether his date was enjoying herself or not. While the intimate details of what happened on the night his accuser refers to as "the worst night of [her] life" are unsettling, Ansari's biggest crime was emotional. He, like many other men, lacked the compassion required to realise that something was wrong, and that's what's really scary. I don't want to live the life of a sexual harassment hypochondriac, but at the moment it feels as though I have little choice. Until we cure society's misogynistic sickness, I'll just have to soothe the symptoms with at-home remedies such as fake names.

Can I still...

STORY BY

Jonathan Heaf

Have the rules changes? Or does it just seem that way? We ask ourselves the questions...

Can I still look a female staff in the eye during a meeting?* The subject being debated here is the actor Timothée Chalamet's perfect wavy hair, you understand, rather than, say, "the new rules of anal sex". (No one can discuss the latter in a meeting nowadays, not even at the *Erotic Review*. Which is a shame, as this is a subject that could do with a little... enlightenment.) Is that weird? The gaze bit. I know the hair bit isn't weird: everyone loves Chalamet's hair. Will she think I'm a predatory mansplainer when, really, I'm just enthusing about... hair? What about when she's talking? Is it best to look down? Look away? Nod? Smile? What sort of smile? Big? Wry? Sympathetic but not patronising? I need to perfect my supportive-but-not-in-a-creepy-teacher-way professional beam. Maybe I just won't say anything?

A male friend told me recently how board members on companies in the US are being discouraged by "consultants" from holding eye contact at all, not even a flicker. "Keep the head moving," he told me earnestly over lunch, looking behind his shoulder, his voice but a whisper. (This is how men now talk to each other, like double agents in schmaltzy John Grisham novels or in close, closed packs outside bars and pubs. Worried. Nervous. Tittering.) "Keep the head moving and keep the eyes moving. Never let them settle." Apparently, even just a glance could be insinuated to mean, well, God knows what, but something career-ending. Come to think of it, my friend wasn't looking at me, either...

What about if I need to give criticism about a female colleague's work? I'm an editor. That's what editors do. Can I still talk sternly about her sentence structure, not because I am a jerk and I need to assert an inter-office patriarchy, but simply because I can't stand the use of conjunctions at the beginning of sentences? (OK, other than when I am doing it.) Should I speak to her in private or in a meeting room? Or privately in a meeting room? Or in front of witnesses? In front of HR? If I contact HR, will that be immediately suspicious? Or shall I just ignore it? But then her work won't improve. Maybe I'll get someone else to talk to her.

Can I call a colleague "love"?* I mean, of course I would never use "love" or "darling" or "pet" or "sugar tits", because that sort of disgusting, chauvinistic shorthand stinks of male entitlement. It would make me sound like the sort of groping dinosaur who goes to all-male black-tie galas in the fusty grandeur of West End hotels and "leaves early" with a small damp stain in his loins and "no memory of seeing anything untoward whatsoever".

Did I call someone "sugar tits" once as a joke? When the despicable Mel Gibson furore exploded in 2006? To be clear here, if I did, it was to expound the fact that I would never call someone "sugar tits". Not ever. That was the gag. Right? Would someone who found it funny then, in hindsight, now take offence? Can historical charges be brought? Despite no offence being meant? ("It was a joke. Lighten up.") And anyway, what does the term "sugar tits" even mean?

What if it just slipped out one day? The "love", I mean. (Forget about "sugar tits": that's off the table – unequivocally.) Down the pub after work and two-and-a-half pints in – I'm a total lightweight – and we are all being a bit, you know, Thursday-night-is-the-new-Friday-night? Or at Soho House after the third Pisco Sour? Me: "Alright, love?" Her: "What did you call me?" And she'd be right to point and shout and accuse. Christ. People would stare. The ambient music would stop like a needle being yanked off a record. Even if the person I addressed didn't take offence maybe someone else in the vicinity would? Someone younger? Someone who got the whole thing on their iPhone X?

There would be a confrontation. My bumbled apology. A threat. An accusation on social media, a screen grab and an email to... a line manager? A lawyer? Then the inevitable Twitter storm. Trolling. Shame. Panic. Repeat. Then the dissection of my digital footprint and the "evidence" someone would find amid the history of my neglected timeline. (What was I tweeting about in 2008, come to think of it? *Makes note to delete all social media accounts.*) Would I lose my job?

Can I still think about sex at all?* Never mind the old adage about men thinking about sex every 14 seconds, now what all men think about every 14 seconds is sexual harassment. Has Harvey Weinstein made all men

expect the worst of ourselves? See a woman at work: think about sexual harassment. See a woman at the bar: think about sexual harassment. See my six-year-old daughter in the bath: think about how the hell I am going to talk to her about all this when the time comes. If anything is to come of all this, perhaps one of the most important lessons is the conversations we're to have about consent and sex with the generation below us. The Next Generation. Sex ed needs to be about more than cucumbers and condoms in a biology lesson. Otherwise, what? Leave it to YouPorn? When did you last masturbate to these keywords: "babysitter, home alone, consent, right to say no"?

Did you ever have the birds 'n' the bees chat with your parents? I didn't. My mother simply left a copy of Peter Mayle's *"Where Did I Come From?"* on the living room floor when I was nine and that was that. I figured it out, drunkenly, like every other thirtysomething person I know. But why do I think about sex the way I think about sex? Who taught men that a girl being mean to a boy is indicative of her "fancying you"? Where did *this* come from? Who should men blame? Our fathers? Han Solo? Liam Gallagher?

Now what all men think about every 14 seconds is sexual harassment

Can I still look up to my father's generation? My grandfather's?* Is it right for young men to feel let down? Why has it been left to us to rewire this decrepit, hideous archetype of what it means to be a man. What does it mean to be a modern man, anyway? Where are our teachers? Who is our lodestar? Why are men not holding the older generation of men to account? What if I'm at a long working lunch and I see an older colleague, someone who I have known for years, put his hand on a woman's thigh after coffees? Do I say anything? Do I stand up and point? Do I take him to one side, tell him he is a lecherous prick and reprimand him? Do I speak to her? Speak up for her? She's older than me. She *seems* fine. Look, she's laughing. She doesn't look upset. He's a figure of power in the industry. He knows my boss. Am I being a prude? "This will all blow over," he might say, brushing me off. "It will be done by September. Anyway, what are you, a *fucking* feminist?"

Can I still come on to a woman?* How does one "come on" to someone nowadays? Do I need to get her consent beforehand? Does she need mine? Should I lead by example and make her feel more comfortable by giving her a form saying, "Yes, I confirm I will happily have sex with you, even after consuming three pints of watered-down lager"? Maybe this form should be in everyone's "link-in" bio. Or is that aggressive? Too flippant? Too forward? There's a prenup so maybe we need a pre-fuck? A piece of legally binding paper that can be sold in vending machines alongside condoms in pub toilets. The bar owner could be anointed with the legal right to witness and sign. What if it's a first date, should men drink alcohol at all? Is one glass of wine OK? Red, white? (Insert joke here about Aziz Ansari, but check with female colleague if OK.) Or should men get all Hugh Grant in *Four Weddings*: bumbling and apologetic and ask if he can kiss her before he kisses her? Cue posh British accent. "Erm, well, would you mind terribly if, well, you know, if I..." Isn't that a little weedy? Not very sexy, is it? Not very Drake. Not very Tom Hardy. And women *love* Tom Hardy.

Can I still go back to her place?* Or do we need a neutral ground? Is this a service Airbnb should offer? What if it's closing time and we're outside having one final, innuendo-peppered conversation and we'd been getting on really well and I swear she touched my knee with her knee – on purpose! – and is laughing at all my terrible jokes and, God, I want to kiss her so badly, and maybe this is the night our story starts and the night we'll tell our future beautiful children about, but... hold up. Wait a second. She's drunk. Not smashed, not slurring words, but definitely tipsy, yet she's coming on strong. *Really* strong. Isn't she? Do I back off? She hasn't said anything to the contrary yet; no obvious signs. But maybe I am reading this all wrong? What was that "new rule" of consent someone clever mentioned in a podcast: "You can hit on someone once before it gets to harassment." Was that it? But what if she's changed her mind? How do I know for sure?

Maybe I need to address my male vulnerability? Do I make it too hard for her to say no to me? That sounds incredibly pompous. Shall I close my eyes and just go for it? Or not? Do I risk her thinking I'm not being passionate or spontaneous? Isn't being kissed up against the wheelie bins in a pub car park the quintessential idea of British romance? I know. I'll walk her home. No, that's going to freak her out. I'll book her an Uber. But that means I'll have to ask for her address. She can book the Uber and I'll just wait with her. Or is that creepy? It's creepy. Screw it. I'll just leave. But maybe she was the one?

Can I still talk dirty to her?* What about when we're doing it doggy style and she's asking me to fuck her harder. Do I fuck her harder or do I need to ask if she's really very sure she wants me to fuck her harder? And how hard is hard? I mean, I used to really fuck her hard and she used to like it, I think, but what now? What about when a woman asks to be spanked? When does a spank turn into a slap? "You want me to slap you across your face?" I know men who have been asked to do this. (Sure, it was me.) I didn't do it as it freaked me out, but what if a woman asks again? How can I hit her? Is that sexy? Do women find that sexy? It doesn't feel very sexy. I mean, I'd hit Jacob Rees-Mogg. My friend Ben (his name isn't Ben) tells me his girlfriend likes his hands around her neck during sex. She likes to be choked. Not asphyxiation, but not far off. She has to apply concealer around her windpipe on Tuesday mornings to cover up the bruises his thumbs make. She's a lawyer. A QC. Lawyers are sexy. Right?

Can I still just ignore all this?* Won't it go away soon? I'm confused. (Confused? Imagine how confused a woman is who says, "No, I do not want to have sex with you" only for a man to try and have sex with her.) Shall I just look away? Stick my fingers in my ears? I know. If anyone brings it up I'm just going to say that thing I've heard other men say: "Hasn't this gone too far? Accusing men who touch knees and hug inside coats in the same breath as Harvey and Larry Nassar?" There is a difference between wanking into a plant pot, rape and inappropriate behaviour, right? (You know there is.) What are the borders here? (You know the borders. It's not hard.) Is this a campaign against white men? (By the way, this sounds really defensive.) White over-privileged men. (That's you, by the way.) Am I a white over-privileged man? (Yep.) Well, I'm white. (Yes, keep going...) And my life hasn't exactly been difficult. (Dude, you grew up in Surrey. You had a springer spaniel named Coco Chanel, FFS.) Sure, there was the time when six men held you at gun point in your own bed (true) and the time when your Lurcher got savaged by a pit bull (also true; didn't the blood ruin your favourite jeans?), but difficult? Horrific? Preyed upon? Stigmatised? Ignored? Been told you were "asking for it"? (No. No. No.)

So maybe it's not your problem? (It is.)

Maybe it will go away soon? (It won't.)

Maybe this is a media thing? (No. That's ridiculous.)

Maybe Harvey will get off? (Just stop.)

Maybe you wouldn't be surprised if he did? (Don't say anything else.)

***Answers: yes; no; yes; depends if your father is Woody Allen; yes; yes; yes; hell, no.**

She reprimanded one of the male rugby players for talking to her breasts. His response was to hit her in the face

Inside Oxford's toxic societies

Elitist politics, abusive tutors and predatory sports teams: the university battling to save itself

STORY BY

Eleanor Halls

"I just remember crying and crying, thinking, "I can't stay at Oxford""

When I arrived at Oxford University as an 18-year-old fresher in 2011, to read French at Lady Margaret Hall, I proudly billed myself an antifeminist. Among many of my male and female friends, feminism was seen as toxic, something "annoying" women did that made them unattractive. As a single girl, fresh from 14 years of single-sex education, I certainly didn't want to be unattractive. I wanted to be liked, to fit in and, finally, after years of treating the opposite sex as party props and gossip fodder, to make male friends.

So when these male friends sometimes "woofed" when I walked down the corridor, I just smiled. When some of the third-year boys asked me to iron their shirts, I happily obliged. When they tied me to my desk chair until I had to phone a friend to come help free me, I tried hard not to get annoyed. After all, I wanted them to think I was the fun fresher. When an email from the president of my college's all-male drinking society containing a list of freshers to invite to a social was leaked to the press, making headlines in the *Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* as a "fit list", I just wanted to know if I was on the list.

It wasn't just my college. During my four years at Oxford, a St Hugh's drinking club, The Black Cygnets, organised a "fox hunt" across the town centre for the most attractive female freshers; the Pembroke rugby club sent an email to the team with the subject "Free Pussy", encouraging players to pick a fresher as a date and spike their drink. At Somerville College, chants about rape were sung in the college bar. Across the 38 colleges, incidents that made headlines in the national press were simply commonplace in our warped Oxford bubble, in which certain privileged public school boys ruled the roost with elitist drinking societies legitimised by white, male tutors who were often members themselves.

Propped up by the university's fondness for old boy networks, drinking societies and sports teams were given preferential treatment when hosting dinners for notable alumni and the university turned a blind eye to bad behaviour. Some of the worst instances of student sexual harassment occurred when alumni came back to their old colleges for big sports fixtures and dinners. When one international film star returned to the university in 2014, it was rumoured he was banned from student rooms as a result of previous harassment during his last visit. "The porters know everything," says a source. "But they would never tell."

Since graduating from Oxford in 2015, however, I have sensed this giant fossil was on the cusp of change. Notoriously private, a freedom of information request forced the university to reveal six years of admissions data in 2017, highlighting its issues with gender, race and disadvantaged backgrounds. (From 2010-2015, 13 Oxford colleges didn't offer a single black applicant a place; almost half of Oxford students are from London and the South East; and in 2015, 82 per cent of offers were made to students in the two top socioeconomic classes.) Its statistics bore little relevance to the outside world, a world that was becoming progressively "woke", in which "awareness" was *de rigueur* and feminism fashionable. Three years on and much has changed again. Post-Weinstein and post-Presidents Club, abuse of power will no longer be tolerated and, most importantly, will no longer be hushed up. Considering Oxford is founded on the very power structures now crumbling around it, I wondered how much it had been affected. So this year, I returned to where I had spent the most formative years of my life with one question: what's normal now?

My first stop is my old college, Lady Margaret Hall (LMH). Several changes have occurred since I left, all pointing to a much more liberal student mindset. Firstly, an Equalities Committee has been formed to reflect the world's revived awareness of "identity". On this new committee sit a gender officer, social backgrounds officer and faiths and beliefs officer, with a trans officer in the pipeline. As of 2017, each student has a "personal harassment" tutor, to whom they can report any issues of sexual assault. "First response" students are also trained across the college in the event of them being witness to a peer's assault. Compulsory LGBQTI, disability and race awareness workshops were introduced last year and LMH visiting fellow Emma Watson chairs a feminist reading group that meets every fortnight, attended by an equal split of male and female students. What's interesting to me is that these changes all precede the current news cycle of Weinstein and Me Too. "If anything," says third-year PPE student and LMH undergraduate president Lana Purcell, "I saw Me Too as a result of the change in culture that's been happening for a while."

Most notably, I am told that drinking societies and sports initiations, previously the focal point of my college social calendar, are no longer allowed on LMH premises (and several other colleges). When I tell these students about how I used to watch initiations in which male freshers played naked rugby covered in oil, using a raw chicken as a ball, and ate fermented fish before throwing up in their pints and drinking their own vomit, they are horrified. "Our sports teams just offer welcome drinks," says one.

It all changed for LMH the year I left, when, during an initiation, the football team urinated on Keble College premises and sung deeply homophobic and misogynistic chants (which we heard regularly in our college bar). The incident coincided with the arrival of ex-*Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger as LMH principal. His appointment was part of a university-wide attempt to bring in new blood from outside the institution (including Oxford's first female vice-chancellor, political scientist Louise Richardson). "If you look at the last ten people to become heads of house, most have come from the outside world," Rusbridger told me. "We've got an ex-Met officer, a labour peer, me, someone from advertising, someone from the music world… We all want to change the more toxic aspects of the way Oxford is sometimes regarded." Rusbridger's disciplinary measures included unusual new tactics: set reading about language and homophobia, as well as seminars and tutorials on the subject. "I found it quite shocking when I spoke to these young men that they had absolutely no awareness of what they were doing," says LMH vice-principal Helen Barr. "But we've noticed a huge difference since [the ban on initiations in college grounds]." »

» The ban may not even be necessary: every student I speak to throughout my three days in Oxford tells me how unpopular and uncool elite societies such as Piers Gaveston (Piers Gav) – known for its reputed ultra-secretive drug and orgy fests, and of which alumnus David Cameron was a member – have become.

During my time, an invitation to a society social by a male friend confirmed your place in Oxford's pompous social hierarchy, in which class and reputation were everything. Women were "guests" of the men. But as Oxford student attitudes are shifting, this hierarchy is disintegrating. The Bullingdon Club, which is thought to have reached peak membership in 2011 and whose members we used to know by name (partly because they would do ridiculously conspicuous things, such as set off fireworks inside a busy nightclub and burn £50 notes in front of beggars) no longer has enough student members; its vacancies are filled with alumni.

A few months ago the website of Oxford's student newspaper, *Cherwell*, uploaded a video of Bullingdon members being escorted from Christchurch College by the porters after they tried to take their termly photograph on the quad. The video was accompanied by "Yakety Sax" and fellow students' cheers.

Yet how authentic is this new mood? "If you're openly Tory at Oxford, you're dead," says a male Tory student from Magdalen, one of Oxford's most conservative colleges. "It's social suicide." There's a sense of watching your back, that this liberalisation is not only a sign of the times, but necessary for survival. In an age when no one is safe from the gallows of social media, you have to think twice about where you sign your name.

In addition to Oxford's elitism, the university lad culture is being dismantled by students. Good Lad workshops were set up by a male student, Dave Llewellyn, in 2013 to promote "positive masculinity", after he became worried by behaviour he saw in Oxford nightclubs. The university made them compulsory for male sports teams last year. Top-tier sportsmen are held by the university as model students and representatives of the institution. Their behaviour has not only been tolerated, but also imitated and respected. I speak to second-year Corpus Christi student and rugby full-back Robert Fraser, who attended the workshop last year. I ask if he found it patronising. "No. It feels tailored to us," he says. "It empowers us to take responsibility, to see ourselves as part of the problem but also the solution." He describes a role-playing exercise his team learnt during the workshop: using yellow and red cards to pull each other up on problematic behaviour. The team has taken to using this tactic on nights out. "We now feel way more comfortable calling each other out. If someone says something unacceptable, I can say, 'Yellow card, mate,'" says Fraser. How do they react when he pulls them up? "They'll say, 'Fair enough.' It's just a moment of relapse. The prevailing viewpoint is feminist now. That's the standard."

Similarly, Fraser has noticed a change when clubbing. "When there's a potential hook-up on the cards, guys will think twice when the girl is too drunk. They'll leave it," he says. Throughout the interview, Fraser twists himself into knots trying hard to make sure he doesn't say the wrong thing and I get the impression this is a man too woke for his own good. Often, his point is lost among the many counterpoints to his counterpoints. After we end the interview, he stays a further 15 minutes to impress upon me my need to speak to women and to ask them about his team's behaviour.

So I speak to Kellogg College student Johanna Dombrowski, 23-year-old president of the university women's rugby team. She was a player and coach during a major coup for Oxford sportswomen in 2015: the merging of the women's rugby club with the men's. Sharing the same pitch and facilities, both teams now sit under the former men's club crown, Oxford University Rugby FC, and women are now allowed to play Varsity matches at Twickenham, just like the men, which finally helps legitimise the women's team in the eyes of the university. Dombrowski tells me about an incident at Oxford's premier sports club, Vincent's (Vinnie's), last year (just after the club changed its rules to accept female members), in which she reprimanded one of the male rugby players for talking to her breasts. His response was to hit her in the face.

"I went up to the captain and asked him what he was going to do about it. The captain replied, 'Oh, he's a nobody. He's in the Thirds,'" recalls Dombrowski. "I remember just crying and crying, thinking, 'I can't stay at Oxford. I'm not safe here. I'm not respected here.' The issue of space, in which men are dominant and women are outsiders, has never been clearer to me than it has been at Oxford."

And while spaces are defined by the students, they are protected by the university, which has often come under fire for not properly investigating harassment complaints. "My issue is not so much the individuals, but the institution," concludes Dombrowski. It is her constant administrative battles with the university to treat her team with the same respect as the men's team that wear her down. Recently, she had to fight hard to get sanitary bins in the women's changing rooms. The overseeing committee didn't understand why she couldn't settle for less expensive regular bins. "I want the institution to respect me, not to have one guy behave slightly nicer to me. Oxford doesn't feel like it needs to change, because it considers itself the best university in the world." Dombrowski gets to the heart of the issue: Oxford's sexism is institutionalised. While Good Lad workshops may shift the attitudes of individual students, they're not reaching those higher up. According to a FOI enquiry published by the *Guardian*, Oxford has the highest number of assault accusations from students against staff of any UK university, more even than much larger institutions.

After privilege and laddishness, there is a third pillar that makes up Oxford's dysfunctional brand: its student politics. Specifically: the Oxford University Conservative Association (OUCA). The fabled nursery slopes for Westminster, OUCA has been affiliated to the party's youth wing, Conservative Future, since 2009 and counts prominent Tories (Theresa May, William Hague, Jeremy Hunt) among alumni. Jacob Rees-Mogg is the honorary president and his nephew William Rees-Mogg was student president during Trinity term 2017 (23 April to 17 June).

Over recent years, OUCA has finally managed to keep itself out of the papers. While still run by a frat pack of ex-Etonians (with the returning officer, Alasdair Macpherson, also the Bullingdon president), it isn't what it used to be. Past misdemeanours at its Sunday debating social, "Port And Policy", include Nazi salutes and colonial chants, which led to the university's temporary disaffiliation from the group in 2009. (By contrast, Oxford Lib Dems are renowned for its all you-can-drink Wednesday night "pre-lash" for £3 and Labour for its Sunday tea party serving PG Tips in paper cups and Tesco rich tea biscuits.) And yet, OUCA remains one of the last pockets of everything that was wrong with Oxford University.

Two anonymous OUCA members, I'll call them Harry and Jane, spoke to me (separately) about the association's culture, in which racism and misogyny have been tolerated. Jane shows me the WordPress blog of a committee member, Magdalen student Lewis Roberts. One of the recent posts legitimises the use of the "n" word. "The word nigger has always been a noun to describe a person of African descent," writes Roberts. "Nigger is a benign noun which should be used as freely as any other noun." The blog has since been deleted. At Port And Policy, which forbids recording devices and cameras, the atmosphere is male-dominated and aggressive. Women rarely debate. Of the association's 246 presidents since its inception in 1924 (four years after women were admitted to Oxford as full members), 17 have been women. On the current committee, two out of the eleven office holders are women, both in stereotypical female positions: social

Pembroke rugby club encouraged players to spike freshers' drinks

secretary and communications director. On a recent OUCA term card, the title "Miss" was inserted before their names. OUCA said it was a printing error. Harry, who describes endemic abuse of women at OUCA meetings, says, "It felt an extremely unsafe place to be."

He goes on to allege that stories written about these scandals never make it past the student newspaper editors, who, when trying to publish scandals, have been threatened by OUCA members. One former editor of *Cherwell*, Jack Hunter, told me, "In the past we've received a lot of hostility from OUCA officials while attempting to report on wrongdoing within the club, including warnings that an OUCA official's dad may be prepared to sue us if we published an article about them."

One former senior member and BME student spoke of racism in OUCA, saying, "The problem is that OUCA embodies every problem highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement. There has been only one BME president in its history and BME representation on the committee is nothing short of shocking. There were elections in which I was the only BME candidate standing. This is an under-representation even within the Tory demographic." Jane tells me committee elections have been unfairly influenced by faculty staff and claims that OUCA is infected with a toxic cronyism that helps give Oxford its bad name.

My final hours in Oxford are spent reimmersed in its nightlife. I want to see if students are as guarded as they appear in interviews. It is a Thursday night and at 9pm I arrive at Jamals curry house on Walton Street. This is where I used to partake in one of Oxford's most well-known traditions: the crew date. A crew date is a social between a male and female sports team or society from two different colleges. The crew date is structured by "sconces": an Oxford tradition in which the person "sconced" must down their drink as a penalty for some infraction or another. These are almost always of a sexual nature. While crew dates were fun, they could – like any organised event for drunken students – be unpleasant, fostering a culture of sexual shaming and sexual expectancy, as well as aggressive masculinity. At Oxford, there is a focus on organised and predatory drunkenness: older male students would be quick to arrange crew dates with their college's new freshers, who were singled out by their looks, told to bring two bottles of wine and sat at the table boy, girl, boy, girl. Attractive Oxford freshers would often find a dining society invitation in their pigeon holes, invited by a male student they had never met.

Observing the crew daters tonight, it feels the only changes since my time are their clothes. "I sconce anyone who's had sex in their parents' bed!" screams a girl with pink hair, a pink crop top and Air Max 1s, as she stands and clamours her spoon against her wine glass. Immediately, a girl at the other end of the table stands up and downs her drink. "I sconce anyone who has a small dick!" A young man is forced to his feet by his friends to take responsibility for his penis. "I sconce anyone who begged their gay friend to fuck them on the sofa!" "I sconce anyone who got fucked by two rugby players at the same time!" "I sconce anyone who's slept with ten girls in ten days!" You can barely count the seconds between each sconce. Watching three tables perform this tradition at the same time is like surveying a hundred meerkats on the savannah.

In moments of quiet, you can hear the tinkling of pennies as they're lobbed across the table into someone's glass. If you get "pennied", you drink. If you pick up your glass with your right hand, you drink. If you don't drink, you drink more. Or you do a shoe: literally drinking a shot out of your own shoe, before putting it on your head. The crew date is so integral to Oxford University life that a few weeks earlier, the Pakistani activist for female education Malala Yousafzai, who now studies PPE at LMH, joined in. Her two security guards stood in the corner, as the youngest ever Nobel Prize laureate (who doesn't herself drink) pennied those sat next to her. The restaurant owner showed me a photo.

When the three crew dating tables leave, a final group of 15 arrive, this time all male. They sit in the furthest corner of the restaurant. With an easily recognisable public school drawl, they begin to chant "Jerusalem". When I go over to their table to ask if they would mind me interviewing them, they introduce themselves as the "Pembroke Chess Club". (They weren't.) Drunk, they begin to insult me. One makes a sexual joke under his breath and the whole table whoops in mock shock. Emboldened, the group gets more daring: "That girl is a c***," shouts one. "She needs to fuck off!" roars another, staring right at me as they all whoop, cheer and chant, "We are Pembroke Chess Club." This is behaviour I have seen many times before.

What is new, however, is the post-event paranoia. Ten minutes after obscenities were hurled at me, four "Chess Club" members come over to my table. One of them, his hand shaking, thrusts his iPhone to my lips. He is recording a voice note. "None of us have given our consent for any of this recording to go anywhere, online or in print," he says. "Please agree." He then speaks the exact time, date and location into his phone. "You don't have my name," I remind them. One of the others turns around and hisses, "But we have your voice."

This wariness is visible in the nightclubs too. Our photographer gains no access and students on the street do not want to be shot. When I speak to students in the smoking area of The Bridge nightclub, even those who have had a few too many drinks are careful not to give me their names. But they speak more freely than my prearranged interviewees and I gain a more nuanced insight. One Indian LMH student tells me the race workshops are "total bullshit" – he feels he is told by his white peers what to find offensive. "We were shown a picture of Selena Gomez wearing Indian clothing as an example of cultural appropriation. I think it's totally fine – she's not making fun of it. But white people next to me are telling me it's offensive."

Neither did the student find offence in the LMH undergrad who recently dressed up as Harvey Weinstein to a Halloween party, nor the one who dressed as Stephen Hawking to a "come as your subject" party. Others tell me about their frustrations with Oxford's crackdown on its wilder aspects. "I want to belong to a society. I want initiations. But there aren't any…" says a male second-year student at St Hilda. Before I leave, I ask him what he classes as sexual assault. Is a hand on the knee sexual assault? He puts his hand on my upper thigh, just under my skirt and looks me straight in the eyes. "What," he says, "like this?"

The morning I'll NEVER forget

STORY BY

Justin Myers

Gay men expect better from each other – but we can be predators too

There are days I play it over and over, or I go months without thinking about it at all, that morning I can never forget. Sometimes scenes flash at me like lightning cutting through the sky. His hand at my throat, breath hot and sour against my face. "I know you're awake. Come on."

I put myself there. I bought him shots so he'd find me irresistible, flirted, silently dared him to take me home. You become narrator of your own nightmare. What else did you go back for? A cup of coffee? He let you sleep in his bed all night and never laid a finger on you until now; you might as well. You're both men. Get on with it. So you stop playing dead and give in. All the while convincing yourself you gave off the wrong signals, that you owe him. Not to mention, you're not entirely sure what will happen if you say no again. Nobody else knows you're here. Such is your confusion, you may well see him again.

The moment you walk into a guy's place, or let him follow you into yours, the dramatic in you wonders if this will be it. Some of us might be cut off from our families – more vulnerable. We've read about straight catfishes luring us to a beating or serial killers preying on unsuspecting hook-ups.

Gay men disappoint each other very easily. We expect better, think we should look out for one another. So it's crushing when a gay man turns out to be like the others, those who oppressed us at school or over the dinner table – not to be trusted, dangerous, a predator.

As a young gay man, you may not recognise inappropriate behaviour or, if you do, not feel comfortable calling it out. While there's much more to being gay than sex, coming out is a declaration of intent – this is the kind of sex you want and now you're free to explore. Men aren't meant to shy away from sex; our libido is supposed to be fully charged and ever ready. It's not seen as very masculine to complain about unwelcome attention; there's no such thing. The image of a gay man as an ageing predator is a stereotype used to frighten children into never taking sweets from strangers, and to dehumanise us, but there exist men of all ages who eagerly await the newest "crop" of men to come out or see a flash of something innocent in us that they want for themselves.

While the setting and starriness of the encounter may have been alien, when Anthony Rapp spoke out about the aggressive, drunken advances made on him as a teenager by Kevin Spacey, we were right there in the room with him. Many of us have heard that door close and lock behind us, the hand on the small of our back and the would-be seducer's soft purr – their ostensibly charming spin flattering and confusing us, not taking no for an answer, offering validation if we acquiesce. Guys bullied for their sexuality in younger days may be so unused to kind words, doubting their self-worth, they may believe it sincere rather than exploitative; maybe they've nobody on hand to talk to about what makes them uncomfortable. It's the silence that traps us.

Many of us have heard that door close and lock behind us... It's the silence that traps us

I lost count of how many weekends, as a young man not long out, I spent fending off more experienced gay men for whom my "newness" was a turn-on. I wasn't particularly beautiful or even that young – I came out at 24 – but as anyone can tell you, it's about power, not aesthetics. Your naivety is catnip, or a rare occasion they can feel superior, in control. I was too green and too polite to stand up to them, so I'd hide behind pillars in nightclubs or throw myself at the mercy of men I hoped I could trust.

I can't, and don't, speak for everyone, but perhaps it's that gay sex once had to be secured and executed as quickly as possible. Our forebears had minutes in a public toilet to get their rocks off, but it's so easy to get sex now – you list your likes, post a selfie on Grindr and your dish of the day will be rapping at your door in minutes – that not doing it feels like we're wasting all this... freedom.

In search of slightly heavier petting, I've put myself in situations where flirting or going home with someone has been "misread" as availability for sex. I endured hands down my trousers while at a cash machine; was bombarded with requests for nudes from a guy I was sitting right opposite; was cornered at a party by a man who'd spent all night hissing at me, thinking he could neg me into submission; and was jabbed awake by a date who coerced me into having sex. You don't need the Rosetta Stone to work out whether someone's interested in you; "misreading" is another way of chancing your arm, until expressly told to stop. Same with "playing hard to get", the last delusion of those who can't tell flirtation from a flat-out no.

Just ask! A shake of the head, or a no, is better than being pushed off. In recent years, failure in business has been reimagined as a motivator, something you learn from to do better next time – perhaps sexual rejection needs a similar do-over. If we really need a "prize", we can congratulate ourselves on our perceptiveness, focus our attention on those who really do want us, and, crucially, sleep a lot easier knowing we did the right thing.

The War on dick pics

The apps trying to move with #MeToo and protect women from abuse

STORY BY

Amelia Tait

Natalie Durkin can't remember what attracted her to Ricky, but she won't forget what changed her mind. "Hey! How's your week? Xx" she asked the stranger in January after matching with him on Bumble – the dating app where women must initiate the conversation.

"Be better if I was in bed with you with a finger in the arse," replied Ricky.

For Durkin, this message wasn't unusual. With over five years' experience using dating apps, the 28-year-old actress has become used to being "instantly sexualised" by men. "It made me feel small and angry… I was worthless because my value to him was only sexual, not as a human being," Durkin says now. Although she would normally have ignored the message, she was inspired by the Me Too movement to speak out. "It's made it a lot easier to say, 'That's not OK.' And the more you see other people do it, it's easier to say." She screen grabbed the exchange and posted it to Twitter, where Bumble replied at once.

"We will always fiercely protect our users," says Louise Troen, Bumble's international brand director. The company responded to Durkin's tweet ready to act, but she had already blocked Ricky. "We have a strict block and report function and a customer service team that work 24 hours a day to combat any type of abuse or unsolicited comments," says Troen, who explains Bumble has zero tolerance of "genital photographs" (or, as they are more commonly known, dick pics).

Bumble has always been this way and was founded as a female-first dating app in 2014. But has Me Too inspired other apps to offer greater protection to women? And have men on these apps – Bumble or otherwise – actually started acting differently as a result?

The day before the *New York Times* first broke its story about decades of alleged sexual assault by Harvey Weinstein, Tinder added a new feature. Called "Reactions", the tool allowed women to send animations to "douchey" men. As far as it goes, animated eye-rolls aren't a ground-breaking offering.

"The dating industry needs to offer some type of post-dating service: we can't be a simple online messaging system anymore," says Jean Meyer, the founder of dating app Once. "We have to take responsibility for what actually happens during the date." Since 2015, Once has used real matchmakers and in February 2018, the app launched new features to "drive female empowerment".

"Most women actually have to stalk their online dates beforehand… Well, there is no need to do that anymore," says Meyer, explaining that Once has launched a review tool to help women avoid catfishes and stay safe. Much like you can review a restaurant on TripAdvisor, Once now allows women to review their dates and evaluate the accuracy of their pictures, while men will get anonymous feedback so they can improve. "Creeps and harassers won't be tolerated."

Claire Certain is head of trends at Happn, a dating app that shows you people you've crossed paths with in real life. "In light of Me Too, we haven't changed anything in-app, since our safety policy is already very strong," she says. Certain explains both men and women are encouraged to report "inappropriate behaviour" on the app.

Blocks and bans are OK for responding to abusive men, but can dating apps prevent men from acting abusively in the first place? When I ask if technology can fix a societal problem, Certain says there also needs to be a cultural shift; Meyer says, "Of course."

Troen believes "you can teach people to behave a certain way through product experience", inadvertently illustrating the problems inherent in the commodification of female empowerment. Dating apps aren't altruistically keeping women safe – they're selling safety. Both Bumble and Tinder only allow paying "premium" users to undo accidental swipes – a problem in a world where men often react aggressively to rejection.

Durkin, the woman who received the explicit message at the start of the year, understands you might not think it was a "big deal". She thinks it's important women start speaking out in order to make a change. "Young girls are being conditioned to accept themselves as a sexual object," she says, explaining that not speaking out normalises this behaviour. Harassment doesn't have to result in rape or murder to be harassment and harassment shouldn't be an expected part of dating apps.

Durkin's tolerance has certainly changed since Me Too, so I ask her if the men she matches with have also changed. "I think it's much the same out there," she says. "I think women are just starting to fight back more."

I go on Tinder to see firsthand whether Me Too has changed men's approach to online dating. "I haven't changed my approach, because I didn't think there was anything wrong with it beforehand," says Luke, 21, from 13km away. I believe him; he seems nice enough. Christopher, 40, says he "is not completely familiar" with Me Too. Tony – whose picture is a topless body shot in which he has raised and clenched his arm to show off his biceps – simply asks, "Do you do anal?"

Has #MeToo's influence spread beyond the media bubble? GQ takes to the streets of Newcastle

Does #MeToo exist in the real world?

STORY BY

Chris Stokel-Walker

Buy a drink and take a seat in one of eight bars and pubs around the Ouseburn, Newcastle's hipster nightlife quarter, just a ten-minute walk outside the city centre, and the beer mat you put it down on looks different to most. It's adorned with a green pair of lips with three lightning bolts coming out and the words "Shout Up!" written underneath. Launched in the city last December, the beer mats are one part of a campaign to make Newcastle's pubs, clubs and bars a sexual harassment-free zone.

But beer mats are just a small step towards tackling the problem. Plenty has been written about the Me Too movement in the press and it's the talk of Tinseltown, but outside the media world, and besides the beer mats, do the names and deeds of Harvey Weinstein and Aziz Ansari come up in conversation? Have women elsewhere started feeling confident enough to speak up about and talk back to catcalls and inappropriate comments, reporting to police incidents that previously they'd have overlooked?

Wander the streets of Newcastle on a weekend, observe the stag dos and students weaving on woozy legs between bars, and little has outwardly changed. Newcastle is still a proud party city. Groups of men in ill-fitting shirts, fuelled by Dutch courage, chant, clap and sing a little too loudly; groups of women in vertiginous heels link arms to stabilise each other. But in the shouted conversations taking place in busy bars, there appears to be a significant post-Weinstein change in attitudes towards sexual impropriety.

Annie-Rose Mears was catching up with a friend over drinks in the city one Saturday when she was told a story most women would find familiar. The friend had recently gone on a Tinder date with a man. They went to a comedy night, but during the show she says she found his hand wandering towards her crotch. "It was dark and you can't stand up, you'd get heckled for leaving," Mears explains.

When the show ended, the friend left the club with her date. "She called a taxi because she felt really weird," says Mears, a social-media strategist. When she tried to get into a taxi her date wouldn't let her close the door. It was only when the taxi driver threatened to call the police that the man let her leave, the friend alleged. Even then, it wasn't over. "He kept on sending her 14 messages a day and leaving her voicemails saying he felt bad and could he take her on another date," Mears says. "But he wasn't apologising for touching her."

Some of these conversations about dates gone wrong are happening in police interview rooms. In central Newcastle, 3,065 crimes of violence and sexual offences were recorded between January and December 2017. In October – the month that the *New York Times* published its bombshell allegations of sexual predation by Weinstein – the number of crimes recorded by Northumbria Police jumped by 21 per cent in a single month. Although the data is still trickling through, there appears to be a post-Weinstein bump in the reporting of such crimes. In the nine months before the explosive revelations, police officers in Newcastle dealt with 245 such crimes in an average month. In the three months after, they dealt with an average of 287.

Among those coming forward with allegations of inappropriate behaviour is Mears' friend. "She'd felt uncomfortable with things like that in the past," says Mears. "Normally she wouldn't know what to do about it. But the week before, she'd read the Ansari story and ended up going to the police. All this being out there in the media makes it more relevant and gave her the confidence to report it."

Although for many attitudes have changed, others feel the impact of Me Too less strongly. Victoria Young, an undergraduate student, has a simple response when I ask her how the movement had changed her approach to dating, "What's Me Too?"

It turns out – after explaining the connection to Weinstein and Ansari – she did know about the movement, but "I'm still not sure how much of an understanding of it I really have," she says. "I wouldn't dare use the hashtag," she adds. "I don't know who's 'qualified' to use it and if I'd been harassed I'd take it to the police, not to social media."

Young says she's not been harassed, though "harassment nowadays goes from anything from a sexual advance to a simple tap on the knee," she says. "I think it's all been blown out of proportion." However, she says, "I definitely think there are legitimate cases and those are terrible. The whole scandal and the response to it hasn't changed my perception or approach to dating – or my opinion of men, for that matter."

Yet many women, thousands of miles from Hollywood, have been emboldened by the groundswell of public opprobrium to the Weinsteins of their worlds. Mears' friend went to the police about her bad Tinder date. "I feel she never would have had the confidence to do so if it wasn't for the stories in the media right now," says Mears. "It's changing the way we think about how people talk to us and act with us and it's a positive thing."

'The Ansari story gave my friend confidence to report her date's behaviour'

Every little thing you're doing wrong (and don't even know it)

The thousand minor transgressions in the mosaic of female deprecation

STORY BY

Stephanie Boland

Some days, you don't think much about being a woman. Maybe it's the weekend and you have a lazy breakfast at home before going out for the day with your partner. At dinner the waitress sees you holding your card and you get the whole of the bill. You're with him, so nobody bothers either of you on the bus home and you stumble in slightly tipsy and watch stupid TV reruns on the sofa.

Then, there are the other days. The days where, even though you have a huge bag for a work presentation, the man next to you on the bus spreads his legs as far as possible, pressing into your calf as you try and fold yourself into a small space. (Nobody, you think, could have balls this big.)

The days where you are subjected to a hundred petty violations – often more irritating than humiliating – which are nothing like the crimes Weinstein and others have been accused of, but similarly put you in your place, mainly unbeknown to the men who do them. The days that are, in the mass re-assessing of gender relations that has begun following Me Too, all the starker.

The days where, sometimes, the postman at the office confuses you with the receptionist and seems annoyed that you don't know what to do with his parcel for the third floor. Sometimes, you're asked to deal with the "sensitive" clients because "you're just better with them". (Your boss does not know you have spent half your journey in cursing a man's pantomime reverence for his testicles.)

Some days you're interrupted all through that big presentation. Some lunchtimes you're asked to nip out and get a cake for Gareth's birthday, even though you also got the last one and your male colleague has, you are quite sure, not once been asked to buy a cake in the five years he's worked here. Sometimes you go out for after-work drinks and a man at the bar is making a joke about how women take longer to come and why is that his problem, and you pity his girlfriend and then you realise he has spotted you, actually, and even though you are pretending to be immersed in your phone he is approaching. These are the days that leave you liable to send texts to your all-female WhatsApp group with lines such as "Can you believe?", "The absolute cheek of it" and "Seriously, in 2018?"

Sometimes, there are also the days you can't contain your anger – which has been simmering since that pair of spread legs on the 453 – and, when the man at the bar comes towards you, already slurring, "Want a drink?" you reply, "Go fuck yourself."

The man at the bar is shocked and his face has turned hurt and angry. He is humiliated and it is easy to feel sorry for him. Perhaps, dear reader, you do too. Perhaps you even think this whole exercise is ridiculous. So some person took up too much space on the bus, you say. Don't you have better things to worry about?

Well, yes. There are much bigger things going on in my life than being interrupted in meetings or getting yet another email addressed to "Mr Boland". The problem is that the effect is cumulative. Put together, these daily annoyances form a pattern in which women are expected to be patient and accommodating and take up less space, while their ideas are ignored, their gender subtly disparaged and their time dedicated to organising yet another birthday cake. Oh, and to do this while carrying keys in their hand, just in case.

It's not only that we don't take women seriously. We also assume their time is less important

While we grow up with these things – our uncles joking about their nagging wives; the older man in the student bar asking six of us why we're out "alone" – it's in the workplace where they begin to really stack up. As Susan Chira wrote in the *New York Times*, "Researchers consistently find that women are interrupted more and that men dominate conversations and decision-making." Women are less likely to be treated as experts too – something that is less surprising when you consider they still only make up 25 per cent of "experts" in newspaper, radio and television news. One friend, a university lecturer, tells me she is always being praised for her teaching and not for her research, which is of high global standing. Another tells me she recently went to put her bag in a cloakroom at an event where she was an invited speaker – and was mistaken for the cloakroom attendant.

It's not only that we don't take women as seriously as we should. We also assume that their time is less important. Women are more likely to be asked to contribute to all those small tasks that keep the office going, like minute-taking or getting those birthday cakes. As Sheryl Sandberg and Wharton School professor Adam Grant wrote in another *New York Times* piece, "When a woman declines to help a colleague, people like her less and her career suffers. But when a man says no, he faces no backlash. A man who doesn't help is 'busy'; a woman is 'selfish'." What's more, women can't get too annoyed about it: studies also show that while anger is rewarded in men, women who get angry at work are seen as incompetent.

All this means that, by the time we meet that man in the bar, we're already sick of being bothered, ignored and diminished. It's not so much that I'm telling that man in the bar to go fuck himself, I'm telling the culture that means, since puberty, men in bars have constantly ignored my lack of interest and demanded my attention to go fuck *it*self. So please try and be patient before asking Gemma in accounts why she's so angry. Oh, and read a woman's body language before you stumble over proffering a drink. After all, to be approached by one annoying man is a misfortune, to rarely have a night out without one is misogyny.

When will industry Weinstein

Black-hearted satire Kill Your Friends presented the Nineties music business as a hunting

STORY BY

John Niven

There is a scene in my debut novel, *Kill Your Friends* (published in 2008, but set in 1997), where a group of male record executives, drunk at the Brit Awards, are discussing the business of meeting women in the pre-Tinder age. One of them, an unscrupulous lawyer, has a fail-safe technique. He places a small ad in an industry publication saying, "Music industry lawyer seeks PA", and then sifts through the applications.

He invites half a dozen promising candidates (all women, naturally) for interviews around 6pm, the end of the business day. If the chat goes well he suggests adjourning to the pub. Half a dozen hopefuls agree and he ends up sleeping with three of them. The conversation with his colleagues continues as follows…

"You didn't even have to buy dinner?"

"Once. One of them wanted dinner."

"How much was the ad?" asks Trellick.

"Couple of hundred?"

"And you got laid three times?"

"Correctos," says Desoto, trying to hail a waiter.

"Bargain of the fucking millennium," Trellick says.

In another setpiece, the book's narrator, Steven Stelfox, is in a restaurant in New York, where he forces his way into the conversation of a female American record executive, who is lamenting the difficulty of getting radio play for older, female artists. (This scene made it into the 2015 film of the book, starring Nicholas Hoult as Stelfox and Rosanna Arquette as the enraged executive.)

"It's a different situation," she says, "when it's Clapton, or Rod Stewart, but for the women…" before listing a string of female artists whose work is ignored by radio: "Nanci Griffith… Emmylou Harris… Chrissie Hynde…"

"Come on," Stelfox says amicably. "Who really wants to fuck any of those cows?"

If you think these exchanges are appalling, I'm right there with you. If you find them morally reprehensible, we're on the same page. If you think they were unusual, I'm afraid that's where we part company.

Of course, much of the humour to be mined from having such an unreliable – indeed downright unreasonable – narrator comes from being able to present the outrageous as the everyday, the Satanic as the quotidian. Consequently, Stelfox became a repository for every bit of sexism, both grand and casual, that I came across during my ten years in the music industry.

The book is littered with structural sexism – the women who cannot get A&R jobs, no matter how much more talented and hardworking they are than their male counterparts, the secretaries treated as underpaid servants, the girl bands marketed as meat, the ageing female artists put out to pasture – and casual, binary misogyny: women routinely referred to as "doable" and "undoable", "beasts" and "boilers", and so on.

When the novel was published, the usual accusations of sexism came flying at me. I was taken for Stelfox, particularly in the US. (On one occasion, walking towards a literary festival stage with my friend Caitlin Moran, who I was interviewing, a wag shouted out, "Oh, look, it's Britain's premier feminist getting interviewed by Britain's premier misogynist!")

These accusations are common enough in an era when no one much under the age of 30 knows what a novel is anymore or what it does or should strive to do. For I had held to a fairly obvious rule when I was writing the book: if I had heard it or seen it then the characters were allowed to say it or think it.

the music have its moment?

ground for scheming alpha male predators. Worst still, it was all true – and mostly still is

There were the big horror stories – the nonchalantly arranged abortions for secretaries at private clinics – and then there was the endless, everyday sexism: a woman having to make a point five times in a meeting before she was heard, while a guy would only have to say it once. Of course, the value systems of any industry are shaped from the top down.

In the music business of the early-mid Nineties the men at the top were in their forties and fifties. They had come of age 20 or more years earlier, in the Seventies. The men who had, in turn, mentored them, were products of the Fifties, an era perhaps only recognisable to younger readers through the lens of something like *Mad Men*.

Martin Amis said that, "At its grandest, political correctness is an attempt to accelerate evolution." In other words, it delivers decency and equality now, rather than having to wait for generational difference to do its work. Your parents were less sexist than their parents. (My grandmother thought it was outrageous, feminism at its highest pitch, that my mother sometimes expected my father to come and carry his own plate from the kitchen to the dining room.) You are less sexist than yours, your children will be less so than you – that's the idea at any rate…

With the onslaught of Me Too and Time's Up you can feel the foot going down on the accelerator pedal of progress, the urge to be done with all this, to get away from it all. I mean, Harvey Weinstein, Louis CK, Brett Ratner, how many more of these guys getting their cocks out and wanking off in front of women do we need? What is it with that? (And all this talk of making sure you have "permission" in sexual encounters. Guys, here's a useful tip: forget about "permission" – how about looking for some enthusiasm instead?)

With Me Too and Time's Up you can feel the foot going down on the accelerator pedal of progress

When Madonna was named Woman Of The Year at Billboard's Women In Music awards in 2016, she used her acceptance speech as an opportunity to discuss the misogyny, sexism, bullying and relentless abuse she'd faced over the course of her career, opening up with, "I stand before you as a doormat. Oh, I mean a female entertainer," before going on to say that her real muse had always been David Bowie, who "made me think there were no rules. But I was wrong. There are no rules if you're a boy. If you're a girl, you have to play the game. You're allowed to be pretty and cute and sexy, but don't act too smart. Don't have an opinion. Don't have an opinion that is out of line with the status quo, at least."

In summing up, Madonna said, "And finally, do not age. Because to age is a sin. You'll be criticised, you'll be vilified and you will definitely not be played on the radio."

I loved the weighting of that statement, the build-up through "criticised" and "vilified" to the punchline: not getting played on the radio. The original, the ultimate, music industry sin.

And, naturally, I thought of writing that scene, in the restaurant in New York, a decade earlier. And the exchange between those executives at the Brits? You'd imagine that, today, that conversation would feel, at best, recklessly dangerous. At worst? Career suicide. Hopefully we won't have to wait for another generation to pass before the sexism in the entertainment industry finally begins to look less structural and more like something else.

Historical.

Kill 'Em All (William Heinemann), the sequel to Kill Your Friends, is out in the autumn.

Has fashion's #MeToo moment finally started?

Our man on the ground at Fashion Week finds the first signs that insiders are ready to speak out

STORY BY

Teo van den Broeke

On a rainy January afternoon in Paris, Kim Jones showed his final menswear collection for Louis Vuitton. It was the biggest ticket of the entire merry-go-round. Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell walked Jones around the runway for his bow, like two lionesses escorting a ringmaster. The front row was studded with stars, including David Beckham, Neymar and Virgil Abloh, and the collection on show was rich in oligarch-friendly fabrics: from iridescent python on hiking boots to sweatshirts made from cashmere. This was menswear at its most decadent, the stuff of the industry's Nineties heyday, and the buyers, editors and stylists in the bleachers went mad for it.

What was most interesting about the show, however, was not the celebrities on the frow. Nor the clothes. It was the addition of a giant red-lettered printout of the LVMH code of conduct, plastered onto two pillars at the entrance to the backstage area.

The new code, which has been drawn up by LVMH in partnership with the Kering group (which owns Stella McCartney, Gucci and Bottega Veneta), has been published in the wake of both the Me Too movement and a series of allegations that have been levelled at leading industry figures: most recently, photographers Bruce Weber and Mario Testino. It's chockablock full of directives designed to protect models from abuse, such as: "A comfortable temperature should be maintained to safeguard the model's health in the case of nudity or semi-nudity," and "The brands must not hire models under the age of 16 to participate in shows and shootings representing an adult."

Condé Nast, the publisher of this magazine, has also created its own code of conduct, and it elaborates on the many points made in the LVMH/Kering charter. The results include: "Photo shoot participants may not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (including unauthorised prescription drugs), and the consumption or use of alcohol and illegal drugs (including the misuse of prescription drugs) on the premises of a shoot is strictly prohibited." And "We recommend that a model should not be alone with a photographer, makeup artist or other contributor participating in a Condé Nast shoot."

Writ large at the Vuitton show, the LVMH charter was at odds with the celebratory mood backstage. Bottles of Ruinart Blanc De Blanc flowed freely and macaroons were piled high. Boyish models chatted with casting directors and agents while Jones posed for photographs with admirers and celebrities. The mood was jubilant and carefree – the code of conduct an intimidatingly worded imposition on the fashion pack's desire to just, well, have a good time. It was a very visual demonstration of the dichotomy that is dividing the industry right now.

On one hand, sexed-up images of beautiful young models still sell expensive bags and shoes (at Tom Ford's show in New York, for instance, the Texan designer closed the show by sending out a bevy of six-packed models wearing nothing but branded boxer shorts – and you can bet they'll sell out before they hit the shops). On the other, the abuse that occurs on the sets where certain images are produced has been laid bare. It's a sea change that has thrown harsh light on not only the practices of powerful individuals in the industry, but also the big brands, major publishers and modelling agencies that put these young men and women forward for shoots and shows.

During the recent menswear shows in London I spoke to David Gandy, one of the world's highest-paid male models, who started his career at the relatively advanced age of 21. Though Gandy told me he hadn't been abused himself, he has strong opinions about why abuse has been allowed to continue for so long. "[As a young model] you are put in situations in the fashion world that you probably shouldn't have to deal with at that age. Unfortunately, there are powerful people and predators that want to take advantage," Gandy told me. "If you are a young model [your safety] is the responsibility of a) your parents and b) your modelling agency," he pauses. "There are good agencies… however, I don't think most agencies protect their models enough at a young age. The agency has to say, 'Until the model is of age, we have to be present in the room,' and I personally don't think that happens enough. Some people argue that this age should be 16 or 18, personally I believe it should be 21."

Elsewhere during the shows there was talk of the alleged abuse, but much of it was delivered in hushed tones, as if discussing it too loudly might bring the industry tumbling down, like a clap causing an avalanche. There was a feeling of shared culpability among those on the frow, many of whom have heard the rumours over the years and turned a blind eye: unwilling or unable to act. Of the male models I spoke to that have themselves been on the receiving end of abuse, the majority tended to shrug off their experiences with a joke: retelling their stories as one would a dinner party anecdote.

One of the main points on the LVMH charter focuses on models being asked to go topless or nude. "Nudity or semi-nudity for models under 18 is only allowed through an agreement signed by both the model and her/his legal representative." It's an interesting point, given that many shows during this round of menswear fashion weeks featured young, topless male models, not only at Tom Ford but also at Willy Chavarria in New York and Moschino in Milan (though notably Versace, DSquared2 and Dolce & Gabbana, all of which can usually be relied upon to send out a couple of oiled-up topless models in their respective shows, decided against it this season).

'I don't think most agencies protect their models enough at a young age'
DAVID GANDY

"[Being asked to take off your clothes] presents a very difficult situation," says Gandy, who was famously photographed in nothing but his pants for Dolce & Gabbana's Light Blue campaign. "It should only ever happen if you feel completely comfortable doing it. If you're uncomfortable, then the line is crossed. Sometimes if models say they're uncomfortable the photographer will say, 'Well, your agent said you would and now you're holding everyone up and the shoot is being delayed – we're not going to work together anymore.' That pressure should not be put on someone and that is when it's wrong."

Although people at the shows were uneasy about talking in too much depth about the alleged abuse, at dinners and cocktail parties they were more open to talking about their own experiences. Most of the male editors or models I spoke to had a story to tell – some more horrific than others. There were tales of photographers touching assistants inappropriately, designers forcing models to strip for no reason on look-book shoots, and editors being groped by senior brand people at Christmas parties. Though few of them were willing to speak to me on the record for this piece, the very fact that these stories are starting to be told – and that people are feeling compelled to tell them – is surely a positive step.

Now that the fashion circus is over for another six months and the dust is beginning to settle, how will the industry move forward in an affirmative way? According to Elizabeth Peyton-Jones, an author and naturopath who founded the Responsible Trust For Models in 2016 (she is now leading a campaign for proper regulation of the worldwide modelling industry via an externally audited standard), it's all about education. "Models from certified agencies should be getting an education in what they're supposed to be doing: a significant one. Not just half a day somewhere or a weekend, I'm talking eight to ten days where they are taught about their profession." She tells me: "A) it would give them self-esteem. And b) it will professionalise the industry, which is exactly what it needs. The whole industry is wrong, so education is absolutely key."

Ultimately, however, the culture of covering up abuse that pervades the fashion industry will only truly start to change when those at the bottom of the pile – the models, assistants and interns – are made to feel safe enough to call out their abusers. The very fact that the only models who, thus far, have spoken on the record are retired, is telling. For fashion's Me Too moment to truly begin, the fear of potential retribution needs to be eradicated and until that happens, the few bad apples at the top of the tree will remain very much unpicked. GQ

What Murdoch saw was apocalyptic. He was getting out before the world ends

RUPERT MURDOCH *IS* YESTERDAY'S NEWS

STORY BY **Michael Wolff**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **André Carrilho**

It was an empire on which the sun never set, a hoard of media interests controlled by the planet's most powerful private individual. But with the dismantling last year of 21st Century Fox, the billionaire who counted premiers and presidents among his coterie signalled a surprising readiness to go gentle into that good night. Did he pull the plug by choice or wake up one morning a man out of time? And just how will he and Jerry spend the children's inheritance?

Rupert Murdoch married Jerry Hall in 2016 and less than two years later sold half his media empire

Are the Murdochs over? Finished? Kaput? On their way to being forgotten?

At the end of last year, Rupert Murdoch, with the support, however reluctant, of his family, agreed to sell most of the significant media assets controlled by him and his family to the Walt Disney Company. This included his film studio, 21st Century Fox, and its library, most of his cable television stations, his satellite networks, including his controlling interest in Sky, and his interests in Hulu and content franchises such as *The Simpsons* and *Modern Family*. Most of the edifice that had helped make him arguably the world's single most powerful private citizen would pass from his hands.

A key part of the Murdoch aura was his old-fashioned belief in dynasty. Whether they liked it or not – and they often did not – he had whipped his offspring into playing their part in an unlimited Murdoch future. His march to world domination, which began in 1953 when a 22-year-old Murdoch inherited his father's ample legacy in Australian media, was supposed to continue for at least another generation. One could easily foresee 100 years of Murdoch demands and petulance and political leverage in the world. But, with hardly a sigh of regret, that seems suddenly to have gone. His younger son, James, the self-styled modern Murdoch, tech-savvy and bold, was, with the sale, being sent into uncertain management exile – an entrepreneur without portfolio or someone else's employee.

His older son, Lachlan, more deferential to his father and less ambitious than his brother, would be left with a rump company of mostly diminishing assets. Their sister, Elisabeth, always seen as the potential spoiler in the four-vote family trust (which includes older half-sister Prudence), now would have nothing to spoil.

Murdoch himself, now aged 86, would be left with a vineyard in Los Angeles, in the hills of Bel Air – among the most expensive vines on earth. Married to Jerry Hall, the model and former Mrs Mick Jagger, the elderly and soon-to-be-retired billionaire was said to be very happy – as happy as he has been in quite a long time.

Murdoch has, of course, always been accused of being one of the world's great cold-hearted bastards. Still, he always seemed, in very human ways, to be attached to his own power, to delight in being the ultimate mogul. To walk away from clout and immortality seemed, to say the least, out of character.

But perhaps this was the ultimate power move – a brilliant retreat. Possibly what Murdoch was seeing here was larger and more apocalyptic than lesser business mortals might grasp. He was getting out before the world ends.

In 1985, Murdoch invented the modern media business. A newspaper and magazine publisher, Murdoch bought a film studio and, in quick succession, assembled a set of local television stations to create a US network. In one stroke, the idea of separate, unrelated media functions – publishers, broadcasters, filmmakers – was destroyed.

Everybody had to suddenly follow Murdoch into the pan-media business. "Media" as a singular business, subsuming films, TV, newspapers, magazines, radio, and almost any other communications »

Murdoch's domination was supposed to last at least another generation

Photographs **Getty Images**

Clockwise from top left: Rupert Murdoch at the offices of the New York Post, 8 November 1985; at home in London with second wife Anna and daughter Elisabeth, 4 October 1969; at home in New York with (from left) sons Lachlan and James, Elisabeth and Anna, 1989; with New York Stock Exchange chairman Richard Grasso two days after listing Fox Entertainment, 13 November 1998; with Anna, 1989; with the Queen during a visit to the Times' print room, 28 February 1985; at the launch of Sky Television in London, 5 February 1989; with President Kennedy and Sydney Daily Mirror editor Zell Rabin at the White House, 1 December 1961

Clockwise from top left: Rupert Murdoch with third wife Wendi at the Golden Globes, 16 January 2011; with son Lachlan, 13 July 2017; James Murdoch after being appointed chief executive of BSkyB, 14 November 2003; with Rebekah Brooks, then chief executive of News International, 10 July 2011; with sons Lachlan (left) and James in Adelaide, 9 October 2002; at his wedding to Jerry Hall, 4 March 2016; with Margaret Thatcher, 14 November 1991; with Nicole Kidman and Wendi Deng in New York, 11 January 2006; at the White House with President Clinton and other media executives, 29 February 1996

» and entertainment concept and technology, was born.

One unforeseen but, in hindsight, natural part of this polymorphous idea of media was that new digital communications technology could be media too, more television than telephone. Indeed, in a now largely forgotten footnote in digital history, it was Murdoch who made the first major media investment in the internet by buying, in 1993, a company called Delphi, one of the first public internet portals.

Although this was an unhappy or indifferent investment for Murdoch (he would later, also unproductively, invest in the first significant social media network, MySpace), it arguably jump-started the race to turn the world wide web into world wide media. If multimedia had been subsumed under a handful of corporate umbrellas, now, in an ever accelerating transformation, it was subsumed under one technology. Digital media was all in one: newspapers, magazines, television, films, radio, all rolled up.

Curiously, Murdoch, old-school in so many ways, was one of the only media moguls to protest the wholesale appropriation and devaluing of traditional media. He railed angrily and impotently against the tech platforms. This was *Lion In Winter* stuff, for which he was roundly dismissed by his son James, an active tech promoter.

Some from the old-media world saw Murdoch as a last hope, holding back the tide through paywalls or, as he sometimes threatened, throwing his might behind the mother of all lawsuits.

Instead, seeing his customary several steps ahead and around corners, he seems to have decided not to make a quixotic effort to save the media business but to instead save himself, exiting at what might not unreasonably be seen as the top – the last top – of the traditional media market.

It is surely a family thing too, or, as he approaches 90, a giving up on the illusion of a family thing.

Few have maintained that illusion – of children following in one's own footsteps – as much as Murdoch. Taking pride of place even over profits, he has laboured to put his children in place and bequeath his company to them. In this, he has endured rejection and heartbreak.

In 2005, Lachlan, taking heat from other executives in the company, turned tail and ran away to Australia. For his father, a part of every day for the next ten years was spent trying to coax his son back.

James, on the other hand, was the in-his-father's-face son, the determined know-it-all, Mr Modern and Up-To-Date, telling his father what he didn't know. James' headstrong, I-do-it-my-way, prince-of-the-world approach opened the door to the hacking scandal and his father's humiliation. Still, in long-suffering fashion, the father rescued his son, pulling him back under his wing and offering him yet another chance to tell his father that he knew better, that he had it all under control.

Most recently, James advocated – in some versions, insisted on – another bid for full ownership of Sky, for which he seemed destined to be rebuffed.

Elisabeth, temperamental, angry, at odds with both her father and her brother James, having in the past left the company herself, was brought back with a sweetheart deal – her father buying the company she had founded in part to spite him – only to chafe and rebel once more.

It is Hall who is said to have given voice to the obvious: just sell and be done.

And then there is Trump.

Old-media saw Murdoch as a last hope – holding back the tide with paywalls

Next to family and money, what was dearest to Murdoch was political influence. Beyond protecting his own interests, the game, and his mastery of it, thrilled him. To be more powerful than the most powerful was the status he sought and achieved. Politics was the ultimate transactional game, for him a game of pure rationality, to which a cold-hearted bastard such as himself was perfectly suited.

When Trump's daughter Ivanka – a friend of Wendi – told Trump her father seemed like he might actually run in 2016, Murdoch said, as if he had some higher understanding, "No, he's not."

Murdoch, who had taken a paternal interest in Ivanka and her husband, Jared Kushner, was only contemptuous of Trump. For Murdoch, Trump was neither a businessman nor a figure of worldly power. He was a clownish egotist without any other purpose than to claim attention. He was not a rational man; he was not, even in the narrow Murdochian sense of the word, an honourable man; nor was he, as Murdoch understood true political men to be, a savvy or intelligent man. He was a joke, "a fucking idiot", as he would privately tell a colleague.

Trump's election was dispiriting and confounding to most traditional political players – perhaps nobody more so than Murdoch. Still, Murdoch did what he has always done: made sure he had maximum influence with the new president.

Curiously, Trump was willing to give Murdoch as much influence as he wanted – willing, Murdoch complained, to talk to him as much as he could listen. In some sense, it was the ultimate "be careful what you wish for" result. He had gained the slavish attention of the ultimate political power – but it was excruciating.

Murdoch tells people he can barely listen to Trump, that the man knows nothing about anything. If politics is a game of shrewd and knowing men, Trump has ruined it.

And yet the Murdoch media has, by the current rules of demographic targeting and political triangulation, found itself the all-important supporter of the president. But the man himself has told people he does not want to be blamed for Trump.

After the sale of his interests, Murdoch will be left with a television network that Disney, having its own TV network, could not buy. Murdoch is already said to be shopping the various stations that now comprise the Fox network. And he is also left with the Fox News channel, which Disney did not want and which, without the support and protection of a larger media entity, becomes, like the president himself, an outlier, its fate more and more linked to Trump's. (When the Disney deal was announced, Trump called Murdoch to make sure that Fox News would yet be under Murdoch control. Trump, apparently, was satisfied with the hollow assurance that it would.) And then there are the newspapers in Australia, the UK and US, shrinking on a year-on-year basis at a velocity that won't likely give them a half a decade more of business significance.

In January Murdoch took a fall on his son Lachlan's boat and will be out of the office recovering from a back injury for as much as several months.

Yes, the Murdochs are done. GQ

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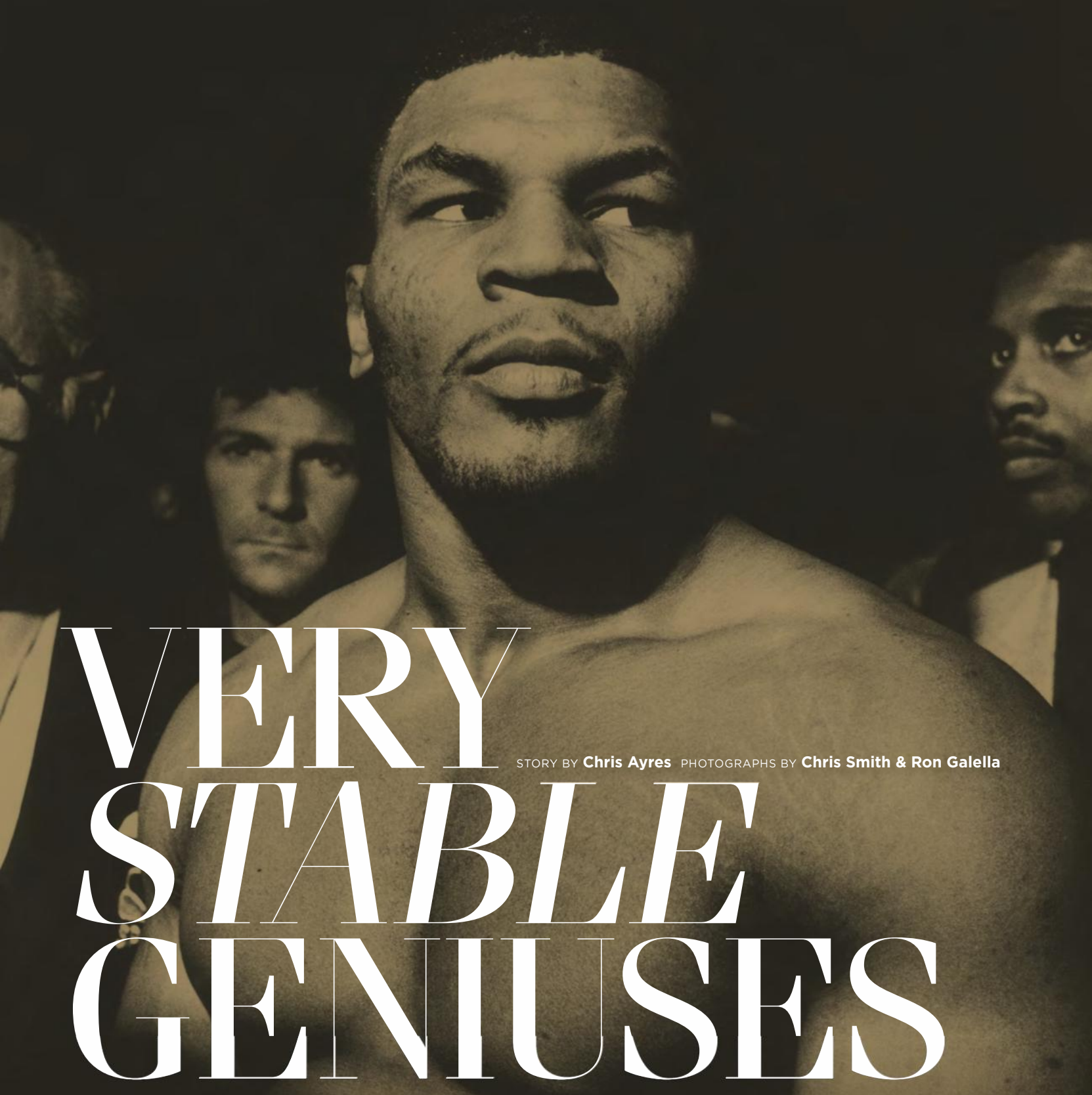
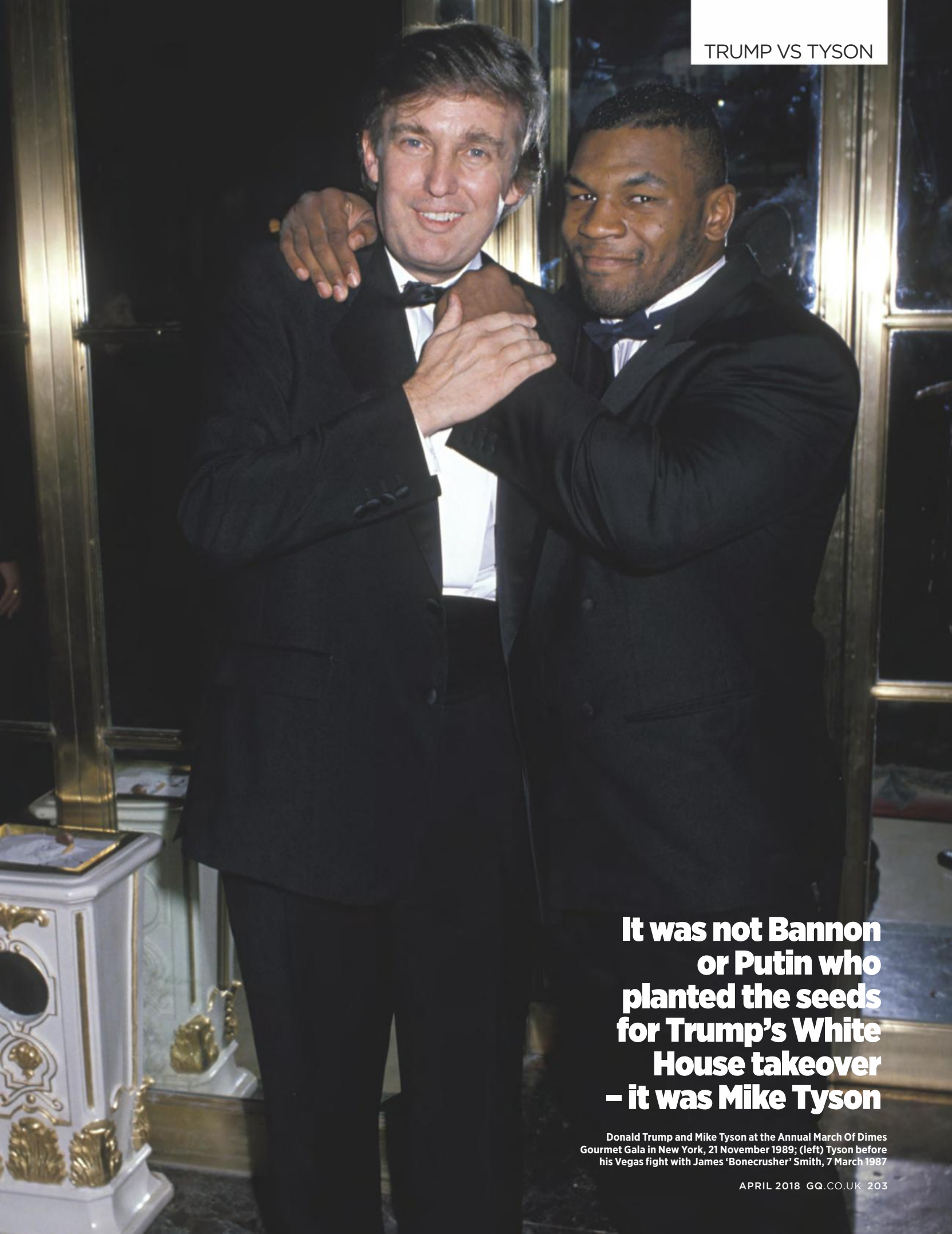


VERY *STABLE* GENIUSES

STORY BY **Chris Ayres** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **Chris Smith & Ron Galella**

In 1988, Donald Trump hosted Mike Tyson in a world title fight to promote his casinos. It became the boxer's first $100 million-a-minute match, helped shore up the tycoon's collapsing empire and – having frozen out advisors who'd protected Tyson since he was a teenager – began a catastrophic partnership that ended with one man in prison and the other bankrupt. But neither was out for the count. And the same mind games and hair-trigger temper that made Tyson the most successful monster in the ring would also see Trump to the White House

Photographs **Getty Images; Wirelmage**



It was not Bannon or Putin who planted the seeds for Trump's White House takeover – it was Mike Tyson

Donald Trump and Mike Tyson at the Annual March Of Dimes Gourmet Gala in New York, 21 November 1989; (left) Tyson before his Vegas fight with James 'Bonecrusher' Smith, 7 March 1987

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for being here, this is a really great honour," purrs the all-too-familiar voice through the casino PA system. "I just want to announce, we've just heard… this is the greatest live gate in the history of professional sports."

The room takes a sharp breath. There's a smattering of applause. And all eyes remain fixed on a podium amid the slot machines and blackjack tables, where DONALD J TRUMP, wearing a lemon-yellow blazer with matching yellow belt and pleated white golfing trousers, stands in front of a microphone, nodding in awestruck recognition of his own tremendous achievement.

The year is 1988. The place: Atlantic City, New Jersey. And the future president of the United States is a mere 42 years old – albeit with prominent jowls, a thickening waistline and that unmistakable sweeping hair.

Flanking the Manhattan real estate developer, meanwhile, are several grim-faced black men, two of them stripped almost naked. The first verges on a parody of masculinity: silk trousers, bare chest, gold medallion, black beard and tightly cut Afro. The other wears nothing but a pair of white briefs that barely contain his buttocks, giving him the appearance of a giant baby. They are, of course, the Olympic boxing gold medallist Michael "Jinx" Spinks and his rival Michael "Iron Mike" Tyson – here to weigh in for a fight organised by Trump to promote this very establishment, the Trump Plaza Hotel And Casino.

To give Trump his credit, the fight will indeed be one of the most lucrative in sports history – by duration, at least. That's because Tyson will deliver a knockout blow to Spinks within 91 seconds, the first and last defeat of the latter's professional career. (He will retire the following month.) The takings, including live gate, pay-per-view and merchandise, will amount to just under $100 million per minute of entertainment, adjusted for inflation.

But this moment in time is worth revisiting for another, more intriguing reason: it marks the beginning of a long, tumultuous and deeply odd friendship between Trump, the privileged son of a wealthy, allegedly Ku Klux Klan-supporting Brooklyn slumlord, and Tyson, a black, fatherless former resident of those same slums.

It's an alliance that will see Trump become Tyson's chief strategist and advisor; take him on an ill-fated trip to Tokyo; face accusations of sleeping with the boxer's model wife; and defend him after his rape conviction and conversion to Islam, only to turn against him a few years later, a betrayal that will help feed the rage that erupts during the so-called "Bite Fight" in Las Vegas on 28 June 1997.

Aside from challenging the notion that Trump is a racist and Islamophobe, however, the future US president's unlikely bond with the so-called "Baddest Man On The Planet" suggests something even more extraordinary: that it was Tyson – not Steve Bannon or even Vladimir Putin – who planted the strategic seeds for Trump's hostile takeover of the United States Of America in 2016.

Trump had been instructed by his father to think and act like a 'killer'

Certainly, research by *GQ* indicates that Trump learned more from Tyson, a self-described "tripolar" ex-street criminal who used fear and outrage as psychological weapons, than the other way around.

"In the dressing room after some of his early fights, Mike would say things like, 'When I hit him, he screamed like a woman' or 'I wanted to push his nose bone back into his brain,'" marvelled Trump in his surprisingly nuanced 1990 memoir, *Surviving At The Top*. "Mike knew those were ridiculous things to say, but he was hoping that the reporters would print his outrageous remarks and that his next opponent would read them and become a beaten man, right then and there." More often than not, Trump continued, the press played along, because controversy sells newspapers and gets ratings like nothing else.

To illustrate the point, Trump cited the example of Spinks, who buckled under the pressure of Tyson's taunts before the fight in Atlantic City: "Despite being an intelligent guy – or maybe because he had so much good sense – Spinks got dismantled, mentally, even before he had stepped into the ring."

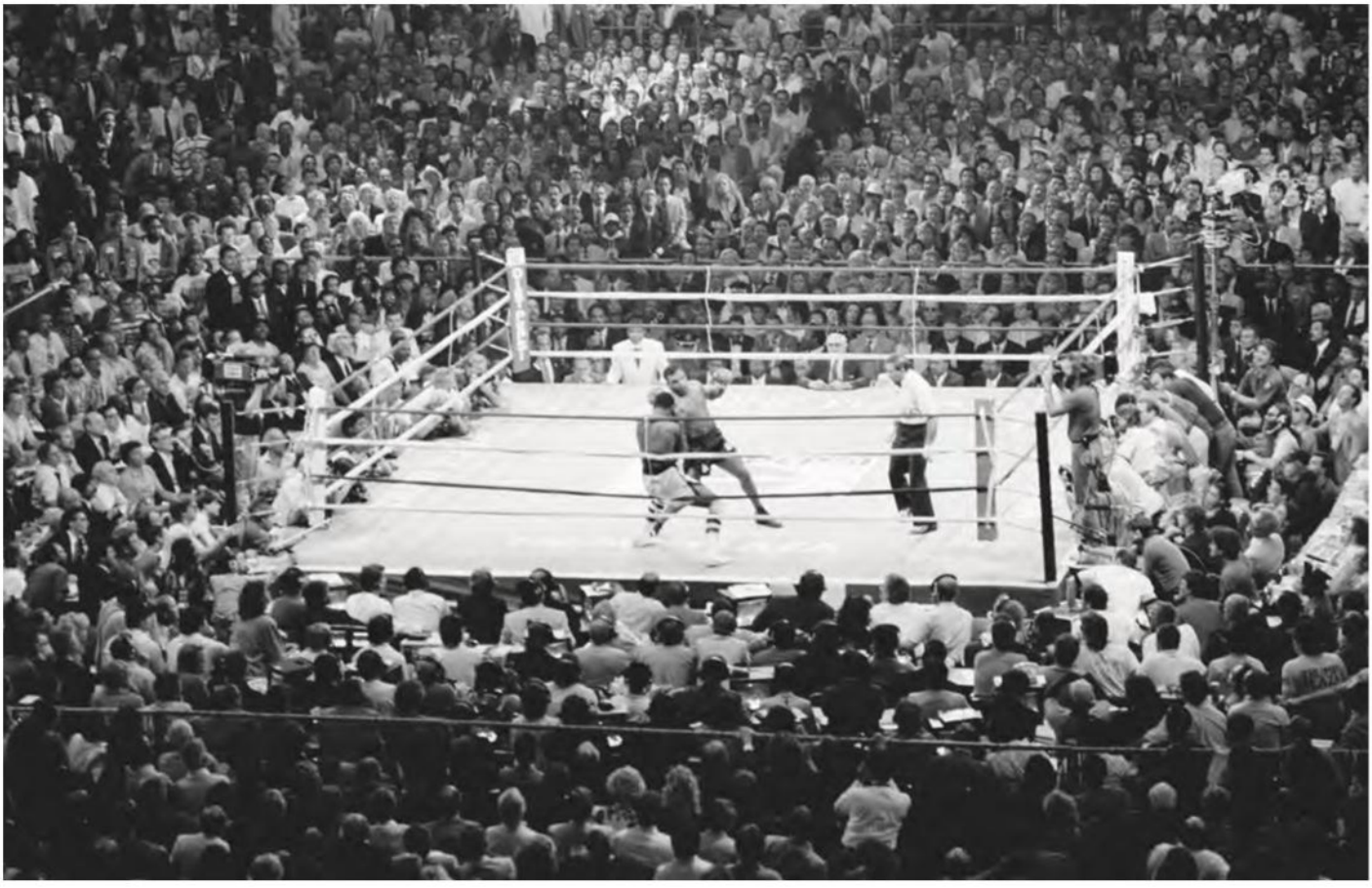
Three decades later, it was a lesson that Trump would use to devastating effect against both his Republican Party rivals and his former friend Hillary Clinton, allowing him to bully, brag and insult his way through the front door of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

For anyone who didn't grow up in the mid-to-late Eighties, it's hard to fully appreciate the scale of the Mike Tyson phenomenon.

Here was a boxer who didn't set out to simply defeat his rivals, but to kill them with the first blow – an ambition of which he made no secret. He shunned the sport's tradition of hammy silk robes and capes. He didn't have a theme song. He didn't even carry a towel. When he showed up to fight, he did so in silence, wearing only black boots and black shorts (no socks) and added a mouth guard that twisted his features into a hellish vision of menace.

At fight after fight, in city after city, Tyson would dispense with some of the scariest men on Earth without so much as breaking a sweat.

"There is an unsettling air about Tyson…" wrote the novelist Joyce Carol Oates, "…that the violence he unleashes against his opponents is somehow just – that some hurt, some wound, some insult in his past, personal or ancestral, will be redressed in the ring. The single-mindedness of his style works to suggest that his grievance has the force of a national catastrophe." »



'Iron Mike' knocked out Michael Spinks in 91 seconds in the showdown financed by Trump (below) at Atlantic City's Convention Hall, 27 June 1988

Photographs **Getty Images**

» Behind the Iron Mike image, of course, was a man of considerable sensitivity and intelligence, best summed up by an incident (the date unclear) when a reporter asked Tyson how he planned to deal with an opponent's fast-footed tactics. Tyson's throwaway response became an instant classic of the sports-cliché genre: "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."

The line could just as easily have applied to Tyson's personal life as it did to his career. Raised in Brooklyn by a mother who beat him with a fireplace poker, fed him liquor to put him to sleep and didn't know the livelihood of his father (either a local pimp or cabbie, Tyson suspected), he had been arrested 38 times by the time he reached 13, ending up in a juvenile detention centre. That's when he came to the attention of Cus D'Amato, a washed-up Italian-American trainer in his seventies, who was transfixed by Tyson's combination of extreme strength and crippling insecurity. Overweight, with acne and a lisp, Tyson had been bullied for as long as he could remember, and he was terrified of getting hurt or killed in the ring – so much so, he would often burst into tears before fights.

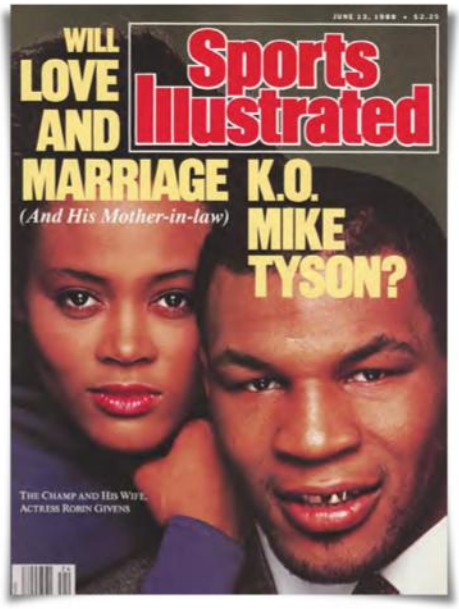
D'Amato taught his protégé that fear was like fire: "It can kill you… or you can use it to warm your house." Tyson just had to use it right.

D'Amato moved Tyson into his own home, a 14-room Victorian mansion on New York's Hudson River and set about rewiring him psychologically, while training him in his "peek-a-boo" style. And when Tyson's mother died from cancer (the boxer was just 16 at the time), D'Amato legally adopted him. Tragically, however, the old man died just a year before Tyson defeated Trevor Berbick in 1986 to become the youngest world heavyweight champion in history.

Tyson celebrated the victory at D'Amato's grave, shaking up a bottle of Dom Pérignon and spraying it over his late mentor's headstone.

Tyson's plan had been to have one of the greatest boxing careers of all time. But without his father figure for guidance, his life quickly started to fall apart. A few months before he faced Spinks in Atlantic City, for example, Tyson had married Robin Givens, a young actress from *The Cosby Show*, only for them both to discover that he had no idea how to act like a normal human being when he wasn't training or in the ring. "My social skills consisted of putting a guy in a coma," as the boxer would later admit.

Week after week, Tyson lurched from one disaster to another. He beat up a car park attendant in Hollywood. He crashed his Bentley in Manhattan – the result of a row


Sports Illustrated
WILL LOVE AND MARRIAGE K.O. MIKE TYSON?
(And His Mother-in-law)
THE CHAMP AND HIS WIFE, ACTRESS ROBIN GIVENS

Newlyweds Tyson and actress Robin Givens pose for the cover of Sports Illustrated, 13 June 1988

with Givens, who had found condoms in his pocket – then tried to give the car away to a pair of New York Port Authority officers. (The officers accepted and were later suspended.) During another argument with Givens, at a former Trump property in the Bahamas, he was alleged to have hit the tennis player Lori McNeil, then reportedly tried to make amends by sending her 1,000 roses to wish her luck in the 1988 US Open.

All the while, he was drinking and using drugs at an epic level (he would graduate to chain-smoking Marlboros with the tobacco scraped out and replaced with cocaine) and was plagued by lawsuits over everything from unpaid bills to paternity claims.

To Donald Trump, however, Tyson remained a hero in spite of such troubles.

From an early age, Trump, like his brothers, Freddy and Robert, had been instructed by his father, Fred, to think and act like a "killer". And the world had seen no better or more celebrated killer than Iron Mike. In particular, Trump was fascinated by Tyson's disruptive, asymmetrical tactics – which, of course, had all been drummed into him by his adoptive father, D'Amato.

One of the key tenets in the D'Amato school of boxing was that a fighter's greatest

Tyson was taught that intimidation could break an opponent's will

enemy wasn't his opponent, but his own mind – because the human brain naturally exaggerates threats and therefore undermines a man's confidence. Boxing wasn't about being tough, he kept telling Tyson. It was about being smart.

To overcome the mind's negativity, D'Amato forced Tyson to think of himself as a god, a warrior to rival Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Achilles, and to repeat such "affirmations" to himself, out loud, at all hours of the day. D'Amato would even sit by Tyson's bed while he slept and tell him he was the best boxer who ever lived, a superman, invincible.

Every day this went on, from when Tyson was 14 to 18, until, by the boxer's own admission, he became a megalomaniac.

Meanwhile, D'Amato told Tyson that those very same tools could be used in reverse against his rivals. "Project your fear onto others," he instructed. Scowl at your opponent. If he reaches out to shake your hand, don't move a muscle. Never do or say anything that could be seen as predictable. Intimidation, said D'Amato, was one of the highest forms of art, because it could break the will of an opponent before he even showed up to fight.

Trump absorbed much of this into his own business philosophy, as detailed in his 1987 memoir/self-help book, *The Art Of The Deal*.

Indeed, a generous view of the young tycoon's compulsive brags was that they were Tyson-like affirmations designed to conquer his own fear. And to be fair, while Trump might have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth – albeit with a distant, impossible-to-please father – the kind of individuals he was forced to do business with in his early career were no less intimidating than the men Tyson encountered in the ring. That's because Trump had decided to expand his father's empire from Brooklyn and Queens into the far rougher, higher-stakes market of Manhattan, where corruption was rife and threats of sabotage, blackmail and physical violence often implied.

Throughout the Eighties, with the help of a "small" $1m loan from his father (actually more like $14m, plus additional capital infusions and guarantees), Trump had learned how to get help from morally flexible politicians by spreading campaign contributions across subsidiaries (circumventing state limits) and how to make deals with mob-controlled unions and subcontractors. One such subcontractor, S&A Concrete, which supplied materials for Trump Plaza on the Upper East Side, was owned by Anthony "Fat Tony" Salerno, then head of the Genovese crime family, and Paul Castellano, head of the Gambino family. »

The boxer is arrested on allegations of rape, July 1991; (below) Tyson and Givens are joined at a press conference by the champion's new advisor Trump, 12 July 1988

Photographs **Michael Brennan/scopefeatures.com; Getty Images**

» Given all this, it's no surprise that Trump empathised so much with Tyson – even saw some of himself in him. "He's a professional warrior, yes, but he's no semi-human being who was born to fight," wrote Trump in *Surviving At The Top*. "He [just] grew up on the mean streets, where any sign of weakness could be fatal."

Like Tyson, Trump had also seen his plans for world domination thrown off course by family tragedy and drama in his personal life.

First came the death in 1981 of his older brother, Freddy, a funny and well-liked airline pilot. Trump, a teetotaller, has long said that it was alcoholism that killed Freddy at the age of just 43. But it was also well known that his older brother felt crushing shame for failing to be the "killer" that his father had wanted him to be. The future US president has even hinted that he may have been complicit in his brother's anguish, saying he wished that he had accepted and encouraged Freddy's career choice, rather than making him feel like a failure for not joining the family business. "I was too young. I didn't realise," he admitted recently. "Now I [always] tell people, 'You've got to love what you're doing.'"

Both Robin and her mother, Ruth, have already had a salutary effect in protecting Mike's bankbook.

Rumours of an affair between the property mogul and Tyson's wife were rife in the late Eighties, further fuelled by the pair's appearance together in Vanity Fair in 1988

By the late Eighties, Trump's grief over the loss of Freddy had been compounded by the unhappiness of his marriage to Ivana Winklmayr, a divorced Czech model and former competitive skier who had taken on a senior role in The Trump Organization, commuting to work in a $2m helicopter with her name emblazoned on the side. (Freddy had been the best man at their 1977 wedding.)

Even more serious, however, was the perilous state of Trump's finances. He had borrowed so many hundreds of millions of dollars, at such high interest rates, to build his casinos that only a sustained boom in gambling revenues could have kept them afloat long enough to refinance. But the opposite was happening, as corrupt local government officials failed to make investments necessary to turn Atlantic City into a real competitor to Las Vegas.

Indeed, the casino owner Steve Wynn upped and left in 1987, predicting that the New Jersey resort city – which inspired Martin Scorsese's Prohibition-era television series *Boardwalk Empire* – would be obsolete within the decade. But Trump was stuck there, hopelessly underwater and sinking deeper by the minute. By the time Tyson and Spinks showed up at Trump Plaza for their weigh-in, a part of him must have already known he was on a long and lonely road to bankruptcy and divorce.

Within hours of Tyson knocking out Spinks in Atlantic City, the boxer formally notified his manager, Bill Cayton, that he was fired – or rather, that he would sue to end their four-year contract.

It was a momentous – though some thought deeply foolish – decision. Cayton had steered Tyson's career since the boxer was 18 years old, in partnership with Jim Jacobs, a close friend of D'Amato's. But just three months before the Spinks fight, Jacobs had died of leukaemia and Tyson, by now married to Givens, had come to believe that he was being ripped off. Givens, in particular, wanted her husband to be set free and in this she had an ally in her mother, Ruth, whom Tyson had nicknamed "Ruth-less".

Trump, possibly sensing an opportunity, supported the break-up and within days of Cayton's dismissal, had agreed to become Tyson's new advisor.

"Mike Tyson has asked me, and I have agreed, to serve jointly, with regard to future decisions about Mike Tyson's career, including but not limited to the lawsuits going back and forth between Mike and his current manager, Bill Cayton," Trump told the *New York Times*. If Tyson had known that Jacobs was terminally ill, said Trump, "I don't believe he'd have signed his present contract."

Trump's stint as Tyson's business guru was as short as it was surreal, however.

"Mike does have some unusual habits and attitudes, especially when it comes to money," wrote an exasperated Trump in *Surviving At The Top*. After the Spinks fight, said Trump, he had handed the boxer a check for $10m. "Mike said thank you, folded it and put in his jacket pocket without glancing at it. A few days later, one of my accountants called and said the check had never been cashed and we had better find out what was going on."

Tyson, it turned out, had "misplaced" it.

More ominously, Tyson had become convinced that Trump was sleeping with Givens – a rumour that was being widely circulated at the time, based on the property developer being seen alone with the model-actress and his alleged complaints about her oral sex technique. Givens had even been photographed in *Vanity Fair* wearing a "Trump Princess" hat, presumably given to her on a visit to the tycoon's yacht of the same name.

Eventually, Tyson made an unexpected visit to Trump's corner office in Manhattan, 26 stories above Fifth Avenue, with stunning views over Central Park, and proceeded to engage in 15 minutes of excruciatingly awkward small talk before finally confronting him. The exchange that followed was recounted by none other than Trump himself to a then-*New York Times* reporter Tim O'Brien. (The full transcript was printed in O'Brien's 2005 book about the future US president, *TrumpNation: The Art Of Being The Donald*.)

"Mr Trump, could I ask you a question?" began Tyson.

"Whatever you want, Mike."

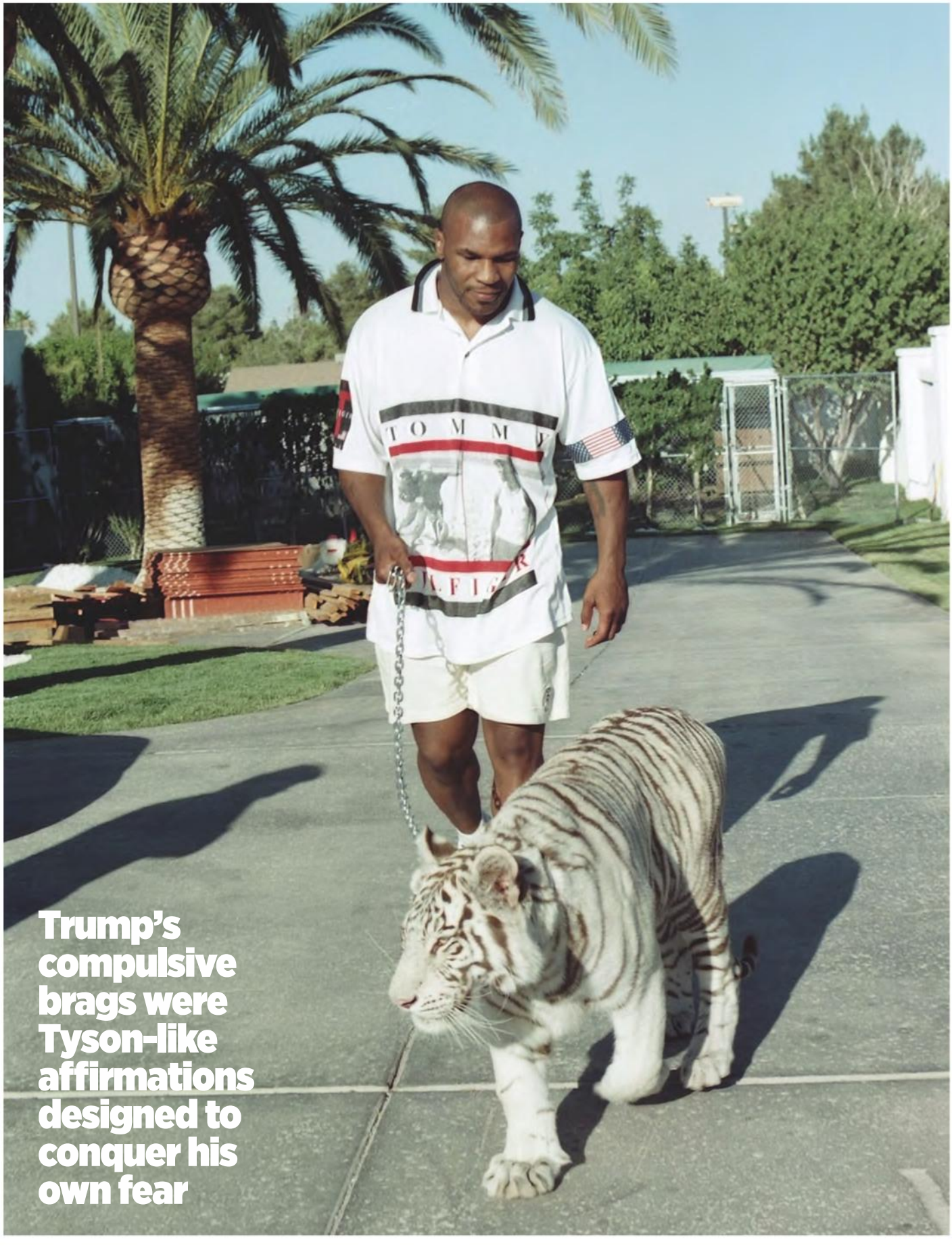
"Are you fucking my wife?"

"What?"

"Are you fucking my wife? Everyone's telling me you're fucking my wife." (At this point, Tyson allegedly produced Exhibit A: the copy of *Vanity Fair* in which Givens is sporting the Trump Princess hat.) "Everyone's telling me you're fucking my wife, and I think you're fucking my wife."

"Mike," responded Trump, "let me tell you something: I never ever even thought about it. And I heard those rumours and they're disgusting. In fact, I called you a couple of times to tell you I heard those rumours and it pisses me off. And I never, ever even thought about it. She's your wife, she's with you, she's loyal to you and it's total bullshit. It's absolutely bullshit, it's false. I give you my word."

Tyson responded by asking if he could lie down because he was feeling a little tired. Trump said of course. So that's what the Baddest Man On The Planet proceeded to do, until an employee rushed up to Trump later to inform him that Tyson was drooling on his »



Trump's compulsive brags were Tyson-like affirmations designed to conquer his own fear

Photograph **Getty Images**

Tyson at the height of his success on his Las Vegas estate in 1989, where the world heavyweight champion kept three Bengal tigers as pets

» leather sofa. "You wake him and tell him," snapped Trump.

It wasn't long after this episode that Tyson, whose relationship with Givens continued to deteriorate, seemingly tried to kill himself in his BMW by crashing it into one of the trees that lined the driveway of D'Amato's former Victorian mansion on the Hudson. He was sober at the time. While recovering at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in Manhattan, the boxer was given psychiatric treatment, then sent back to the same house – this time under the care of D'Amato's surviving domestic partner, Camille Ewald. None of which deterred Givens from filing for divorce and simultaneously suing her husband for defamation, for which she demanded $125m in damages.

Complicating matters, Tyson and Givens reportedly continued to sleep with each other as the court proceedings went on. What's more, on one visit to his estranged wife's house, the boxer allegedly discovered a not-yet-famous Brad Pitt on his way out.

"Dude, don't strike me," a worried Pitt pleaded, according to Tyson.

By now, Trump, like Givens, had decided that enough was enough and asked Tyson to make a $2m donation to his foundation to settle the bill for his services to date. "As you are aware, I was very happy to beat Bill Cayton and reduce the ridiculous fees he was getting from you both on his management and personal service contracts," Trump wrote in an open letter to the boxer. "Not only was this time-consuming, but tremendous energies and knowledge were displayed – much as you display your energy and knowledge in the ring against an opponent. Over the course of your career, I have probably saved you substantially in excess of $50m and therefore the $2m contribution, all of which will go to worthy charities, is very reasonable."

Trump – who would later infamously use money from his charity to pay his own legal fees, buy a $20,000 portrait of himself and give to a political support group for Florida's attorney general at a time when she was looking into fraud allegations against Trump University – concluded, "If you could ask your accountants to write a check to the Donald J Trump Foundation, I will distribute the money in my name and yours, and will let you have a list of the charities which benefited."

Whether or not Tyson ever paid the $2m isn't known. But the request didn't seem to do any harm to their friendship.

Just over a year later, in 1990, Trump organised a fight between Tyson and Buster Douglas in Tokyo (promoted as "Tyson is back!") as part of a marketing effort to find some wealthy Asian buyers for Trump's latest apartment development in Manhattan.

Trump being Trump, however, he took his hyperbole to another level by starting a rumour, lapped up by the media, that Michael Jackson would attend. When Jackson failed to materialise, however, the Japanese quickly lost interest in the loud-mouthed New Yorker and his glossy property brochures. Meanwhile, Tyson, then still undefeated as world heavyweight champion, was left unnerved and off-form and lost to the underdog Douglas in a historic upset. According to Harry Hurt, one of Trump's biographers, the property developer refused to visit his friend's dressing room after the fight. "I can't go near him," he reportedly said. "It might rub off. The same thing could happen to me."

Trump's fear was understandable. In Atlantic City, his Taj Mahal casino was about to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, leaving him with $900m in personal debts, forcing him to sell his Trump Shuttle airline and Trump

'Mike, let me tell you. She's your wife. She's loyal. It's false. I give you my word'

Princess yacht. Trump Plaza and Trump Castle would also soon go under, along with the Trump Plaza Hotel in Manhattan – although by this time Trump had learned to insulate himself from the losses. His marriage to Ivana, meanwhile, had become unsalvageable, resulting in a $25m divorce settlement, in spite of no fewer than four prenuptial agreements; and his affair with Marla Maples, aka Miss Hawaiian Tropic, was all over the tabloids, spawning eight consecutive front-page stories in the *New York Post*. One of them simply featured Trump's smirking face and the headline "Best Sex I've Ever Had".

Tyson's post-Tokyo problems were even more profound, however, thanks to the accusation that he had raped a Miss Black America contestant in a hotel room while serving as a judge for the pageant. A jury in Indianapolis found him guilty on one count of rape and two counts of criminal deviate conduct and he was sentenced to six years in prison, of which he would serve three.

In spite of Trump's abandonment of his friend in Tokyo, he stood up for him after his trial, arguing that the boxer should be spared incarceration, allowed to continue with his career, but give his earnings to rape charities. "As everybody knows, I am very strong on the death penalty and for the strongest of sanctions and hardest of disciplines for anyone," he declared. "But far more people can be helped by allowing the tremendous sums of money from his fights to be put into funds used for rape victims."

What Trump didn't mention, of course, is that he would have almost certainly taken a cut from Tyson's rape repentance tour by hosting bouts or acting as manager or promoter and also probably attempting to channel the charitable funds through his foundation. A win-win for everyone, in Trump's mind, even if it did come at the expense of justice being served.

In the end, of course, nothing could save Tyson from prison, where he somehow managed to become romantically and sexually involved with his drug counsellor. Trump, meanwhile, married Maples, a decision supposedly prompted by a mass shooting on the Long Island Rail Road, in which a lone gunman murdered six people and wounded 19 others. "I figured life is short and I want to do this now," he reportedly told his soon-to-be bride. A more practical reason for the nuptials was the fact that Maples had by now given birth to a baby daughter, Tiffany. But the marriage was another disaster, thanks largely to Maples being caught on a beach near Trump's Mar-A-Lago resort at 4am with one of her husband's bodyguards. (The bodyguard in question struggled to find work again and later died from a drug overdose.)

With Trump's finances still in disarray – he now had two ex-wives on his payroll and close to a billion dollars of losses on his 1995 tax return – his mood seemed to change and the darker, angrier Trump, with whom the world is now very familiar, started to emerge.

"[He] struck me as adolescent, hilariously ostentatious, arbitrary, unkind, profane, dishonest, loudly opinionated and consistently wrong," wrote the *Black Hawk Down* author, Mark Bowden, after meeting him at around this time for what turned out to be a deeply unflattering profile in *Playboy* magazine. In the piece, Bowden recalled Trump referring to everyone from the pilot of his jet to the designer who chose his carpets as "fucking idiots". He even kicked a water fountain on his tennis court in a fit of rage.

When Tyson was freed in 1995, just as Trump's former wedding guest OJ Simpson found himself on trial for double murder in Los Angeles, it should by rights have lifted the businessman's mood. Tyson, after all, owed Trump a debt of gratitude for the way he'd stood up for him in the press when no one else would go anywhere near a convicted

rapist. And, of course, the boxer's first fight after prison would be one of the biggest and most profitable spectacles the world had ever seen. It seemed a foregone conclusion that Trump would somehow be cut into the deal, making this oddest of couples the comeback kings of the Nineties.

Instead, however, Tyson went into business with the promoter Don King, a man who Trump had once said he admired for his "fanaticism about beating the white establishment at its own game" even though "that doesn't work in my interests financially". The first bout that King organised – Tyson vs Peter McNeeley, which lasted all of 89 seconds – took place at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas and just beat the Trump Plaza takings of $100m per minute. It was followed by two more staggeringly lucrative fights, against Britain's Frank Bruno (Bruno's last) and Bruce Seldon.

Tyson, needless to say, was victorious on all three occasions. And Trump, it seemed, hadn't earned a penny from any of it.

But then, in 1996, came Tyson's first encounter with Evander Holyfield, a boxer four years his elder, three inches taller and utterly unfazed by the Baddest Man On The Planet. Tyson tried his usual mind games, such as throwing a punch after the bell, but the powers that D'Amato had given him were weakening. The fight, which would have taken a younger Tyson just a few seconds to win, dragged on for eleven rounds, with the referee ultimately stopping the action due to the severity of Tyson's injuries.

Ten years after he had first conquered the world, Tyson's run was over.

Desperate to prove that the result was a fluke, Tyson made sure that a sequel to the match-up was quickly put in the works. But this was when Trump decided – either consciously or out of pure killer instinct – to stick the knife into Iron Mike, while he was already down. Using the very same tactics he'd learned from Tyson, which Tyson had in turn learned from D'Amato, he dismantled his friend, mentally, by bragging to the *New York Daily News* that he had bet $1m, at 20-1 odds, that Tyson would lose the first Holyfield bout. Trump's alleged payout: $20m.

"You just don't bet 20-1 odds against a champion," he explained coldly. "[But] I have to admit that I was surprised when Holyfield won."

The $1m bet was almost certainly a fiction. Reporters who called Las Vegas bookmakers to check the veracity of the report just heard laughter on the other end of the line. But the story stuck. And Tyson could hardly complain: he had practically invented the art of saying any insane thing that came into his mind to get the press' attention and intimidate his adversaries.

The fascinating question, of course, was why Trump had suddenly turned against Tyson. Was he annoyed and jealous that it was Don King who had collected the takings from the boxer's comeback tour? Had Maples' alleged affair with a bodyguard made him view Tyson's sexual misconduct differently? Or was it simply that Trump no longer saw Iron Mike as a winner – perhaps the worst possible offence in Trump's eyes? Whatever the case, Trump's very public short-selling of Tyson's career didn't help the boxer's mood – or confidence – when the Holyfield rematch finally took place a few months later, also in Las Vegas.

With 40 seconds remaining in the third round, Tyson, realising he was losing again and furious over what he thought were Holyfield's illegal headbutts, sunk his teeth into his opponent's right ear, tore off a chunk of cartilage and spat it out. Holyfield leapt away, howling in pain, blood running down his neck. Astonishingly, the fight was allowed to continue. It was only when Tyson bit Holyfield again, on the other ear, as the crowd howled and booed in disgust, that the referee finally shut it down. Tyson was dragged out of the ring, still swinging punches as he went.

Tyson was victorious in all three fights. And Trump hadn't earned a penny

Tyson didn't just lose: he was banned from the sport by the Nevada State Athletic Commission and fined $3m – his efforts to rehabilitate his image in ruins. He later apologised to Holyfield – who is still missing part of his ear to this day – on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Tyson and Trump had little to do with each other in the years that followed, their dysfunctional bromance soured by the air of betrayal and respective failure. Trump married again, this time to Melania (who infamously posed nude for this magazine), and Tyson married twice more, first to Monica Turner, a medical student, then to his current wife, Lakiha "Kiki" Spicer. The boxer also suffered many exhaustively documented troubles in between, including the death of his four-year-old daughter in a treadmill accident and a long struggle to overcome addiction and mental illness.

After several lost years in the early noughties, however, both men returned from the celebrity grave: Trump as a peddler of reality television and political conspiracy theories; Tyson as the breakout star of *The Hangover* and an author and Broadway performer.

Their relationship, meanwhile, gradually began to thaw. In 2012, when Tyson was performing his one-man show, *Undisputed Truth*, Trump went backstage and told the boxer that it was "beautiful". Tyson returned the favour by endorsing Trump for president when he announced his candidacy three years later. In theory, this shouldn't have been helpful: Tyson, after all, is a convicted rapist. But the fact that an African-American Muslim was willing to support a politician widely accused of racism and Islamophobia was exactly the kind of head-spinning contradiction upon which Trump's guerrilla campaign was based.

And Tyson must have smiled, perhaps even felt some small sense of pride, when he saw Trump employ such familiar tactics on the trail. There he was, at rallies from Wisconsin to Florida, repeating his affirmations ("I'm really rich... I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created... Nobody builds walls better than me... I'm really smart...") and projecting his weaknesses onto his rivals ("How can Ted Cruz be an Evangelical Christian when he lies so much and is so dishonest?"). Later, after winning the Republican Party's nomination, the New York property developer went on to take D'Amato's art of intimidation to new levels, refusing to shake Hillary Clinton's hand at a debate and inviting her husband's former sexual harassment accusers to sit in the audience and glare at her. Every day, meanwhile, came a new media-baiting outrage, from "I like people who weren't captured" – a reference to the US senator and former prisoner of war John McCain – to "I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn't lose any voters."

By the time the ballots were counted, and Hillary conceded, it was surely Trump, not Tyson, who was now the Baddest Man On The Planet – in every thrilling and terrifying sense of the phrase. GQ

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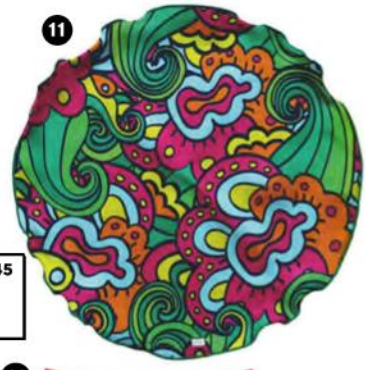

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37

THE POLKA €89
PODENCO EIVISSA
WWW.PODENCOEIVISSA.COM
IG: @PODENCOEIVISSAOFFICIAL

38

LUX DRIFT TRUNK
$34.00
JACK ADAMS
WWW.JACKADAMSUSA.COM

39

UNIBROW £120
OPTIMEF
WWW.OPTIMEF.COM

40

ELECTRIC BLUE PYTHON BOWTIE $350
DLEAK LEATHER BOW TIES
WWW.DLEAKLEATHERBOWTIES.COM
IG: @DLEAKBOWTIES

41

BLACK & GREY NYLON $35
SOUTHERN STRAPS
WWW.SOUTHERNSTRAPS.COM
IG: @SOUTHERN.STRAPS

42

3-IN-1 BACK PACK
LAPHINY
WWW.LAPHINY.COM
IG: @LAPHINYCOLLECTION

43

THE RAID $675
REVERY
WWW.REVERYNYC.COM
IG: @REVERYNYC

44

MIDNIGHT $35
SOLETIE
WWW.SOLETIE.COM
IG: @SOLETIE

29. Heist London is one to watch for 2018. Their latest piece is a must have, sportswear inspired style made from a combination of velvet and polyester. For a limited time only, use the code GQ18 at the checkout for 15% off (expires 05/04/2018). **30.** At **Grants 1856**, named in honour of their family's rich history, they have a long heritage and believe in providing their customers with a unique shopping experience. For more than a century and a half, Grants' ancestors have been a familiar presence on the Cleethorpes High Street. What once was a small business is now a thriving hub for menswear in the North Lincolnshire area. Each and every season, they handpick the finest most sought-after clothing labels for their store. **31. Forgotten Youth** is a lifestyle brand curating a community influenced by surfing, skateboarding, art and music. Conveying the importance of self-expression, exploration, awareness and use of imagination. A generation Lost in Thought. Once they are gone, the garments released for that specific exclusive collection will never be printed again – first come first serve. **32. Victory Leathercraft** hand craft their luxury leather goods in West Sussex, England using only the highest quality materials. Latest release is the Town and Country Backpack, made from full-grain veg-tanned bridle leather together with solid brass fittings. Perfect for either business or casual use, available in limited numbers in black or chestnut. www.victoryleathercraft.com **33. Eminence Wallet.** Do you have too many plastic cards to carry? This is just the wallet for you. Made with finest leather it is designed to hold notes and cards horizontally so that the wallet fits neatly in jacket inside pocket. It comes with box to make the ideal gift. **34.** It's all in the details. **HH Jewelry** deliver the perfect accessory for any occasion. Pair it with a watch, suit or whatever you want! All bracelets are handmade with top quality semi-precious gemstones. Male, female and unisex! Visit www.hh-jewelry.net **35. Flint Watches** are a British brand that offer a range of dress timepieces crafted from natural premium materials. These include interchangeable goat leather straps and genuine green marble bezel. Each watch is hand fitted with a Swiss movement, ensuring quality for great value. **36. DMITRY Ties** have redefined fashion by introducing a unique and exclusive palette of luxurious silk men's neckwear that appeal to fashionable men of all ages. Each tie has its own voice and personality. Their mission is to take a classic accessory and update it for today's man on the go. **37. Podenco Eivissa** is an independent brand that oozes Mediterranean style. Born on the island of Ibiza, this luxury brand offers a selection of printed mid thigh length, colourful swim shorts and printed cotton shirts that will keep your look fresh for summer. Enter the word 'DISCOUNT' at checkout to receive 10% your order (expires 04/04/2018). **38.** If you're having to constantly tug, pull and grab at ill-fitting underwear, you can't be comfortable and confident. **Jack Adams** have ended these discomforts with their Lux Drift Collection, micro Lenzing modal (woodfiber from Beech trees) underwear that feels like you're wearing nothing at all. An extremely luxurious fabric, it's cool to the touch, absorbent and similar in texture to silk or cotton. Unlike cotton, however, it is resistant to shrinkage and less likely to fade or pill. Fits and feels like a second skin. Performs well for even the longest day's wear. **39.** Following the succes of watch model Farazece, Unibrow is **Optimef**'s first pair of sunglasses. Unibrow has a retro-inspired look, but the asymmetric composition of geometric metal insertions evoking Memphis Group's graphics gives it a contemporary vibe. Read more on www.optimef.com **40. Dleak Leather Bow-ties** is a New York based brand that stocks a small collection of custom handmade leather bow-ties and accessories. With a maximum of 5 of each design, this ensures that every client has their own unique Dleak experience. They offer a variety of embossed and genuine python, crocodile, ostrich, lambskin, stingray, paisley, suede, woven leathers and much more. No more boring bow-ties! Let your tie do the talking! **41. Southern Straps.** Handcrafted in San Francisco from the finest materials, Southern Straps for the Apple Watch come with an unrivalled lifetime warranty. **42.** Discover **LAPHINY**'s most unique additions to their 2018 collection. A subtle sophisticated look that blends in smoothly with your daily look. From the briefcase to the backpack, the roomy interior will fit the essentials for the workday or kickin' it around the city with the mates. Designed for you and your journey from downtown Los Angeles. Check out the gender neutral LAPHINY collection at www.laphiny.com Use code GQ20 for GQ special promotion (until stocks last). **43. REVERY** is a luxury streetwear brand founded by Cecil Dove and Rakan Nimr. All of their garments are designed and manufactured in New York City with the pervading belief that fashion is a universal language that binds us all together. **44. Soletie** is a men's accessory store founded in 2013, after hearing several gentlemen discussing the difficulties in finding unique accessories that are affordable. In the first 3 weeks, the first 100 products sold out and the demand continued to grow. The team at Soletie pride themselves in providing a great assortment of eclectic socks, ties, pock squares, lapel pins, belts, jewellery and scarves. Take a look at www.soletie.com

45

THE HUSKY
HOUND
WWW.HOUNDACCESSORIES.COM
IG: HOUND_ACCESSORIES

46

THREE ENGLISH LIONS CUFFLINK £49
WIMBLEDON CUFFLINK COMPANY
WWW.WIMBLEDONCUFFLINKS.COM
IG: @WIMBLEDONCUFFLINKCOMPANY

47

STORYTELLER FLAGMATE £8.99
AND FLAGS FROM £1.99
STORYTELLER
WWW.STORYTELLERTRAVEL.CO.UK
IG: @STORYTELLERTEAM

48

BUTTERFLY BOWTIE
BUILD-A-BOW
WWW.BUILDABOWBYALEX.COM

49

KHAKI FIELD MECHANICAL £375
REF. H69429931
WWW.HAMILTONWATCH.COM
IG: @HAMILTONWATCH

50

KINGZ LOGO LONGLINE TSHIRT £34.99
HOUSE OF KINGZ
WWW.HOUSEOFKINGZCLOTHING.COM
IG: @HOUSEOFKINGZUK

51

CUSTOM HAND PAINTED "KING TUT"
T SHIRT $60
TEZCUSTOMZ
WWW.TEZCUSTOMZ.BIGCARTEL.COM
IG: @TEZCUSTOMZ

52

OBSCENE MOOD HOODIE $45
OBSCENE APPAREL
WWW.OBSCENESAPPAREL.BIGCARTEL.COM
IG: @OBSCENEAPPAREL

53

FIELD PANT $175
TENDEN
WWW.TENDEN.US
IG: @TENDEN

54

LEO WASH BAG £49.99
VETELLI
WWW.VETELLI.COM

55

RUCIAL BRACELET
LVK JEWELRY
LVKJEWELRY.COM

56

HALF BAKER DENIM SHIRT €95
WWW.SKYRTAOFICELAND.COM
IG: @SKYRTAOFICELAND

57

SOHO MID-TOP £170
OLI X OLIVER
WWW.OLIXOLIVER.COM
INSTAGRAM: OLI_X_OLIVER

58

CLASSIC DASH – NEBULA
ORUS CO.
WWW.ORUSCLOTHING.COM
ASOS MARKETPLACE: @ORUSCO.
IG: @ORUS_CLOTHING

59

GAUDI PRINT NOMAD SWIM SHORT £125
NICOLAS ALEXANDER
WWW.NICOLASALEXANDERSWIMWEAR.COM
IG: @NICOLASALEXANDERSWIMWEAR

45. Australian artisan accessories by **Hound** – creators of elegant and playful bow ties for gentlemen. Man's best accessories, WOOF! Visit www.houndaccessories.com **46. Wimbledon Cufflink Company** offers unique cufflink and watch designs, which draw inspiration from classical, historical and culturally significant images, patterns and emblems. It puts a modern twist on the traditional with high quality, wearable style. Aspiration is the great driving force of the times we live in, whether this is to live better, look better, or do more for others and yourself. Wimbledon Cufflink Company's new website reflects this aspiration, through its cutting-edge, individual, wearable design pieces. **47. Storyteller** builds unique travel accessories, such as their Storyteller FlagMate (also available without the clip) and attached Flags which can be personalised with a message using up to 35 characters, helping explorers remember their chapters of travel. Every purchase helps to make a difference and 10% of each sale is used to fund educational workshops for individuals in less privileged areas of the world. **48.** Alex Hart-Upendo is the CEO and Founder of **Build-A-Bow**, a custom bow retailer. The 11 year old bowtie connoisseur, started the company after he was being bullied. He took the negative term nerd, and turned it into something positive and fashionable. A portion of proceeds go to his community charity and bullying initiative. **49. Hamilton.** Rough and rugged. The Khaki Field Mechanical returns to its roots with a bold design true to the original 1969 "Hack" watch. Featuring a 42 hour power reserve, sandblasted case, green nato strap with brown calfskin loops and "old radium" style superluminova hands. **50. House of Kingz** are an up and coming menswear clothing company based in Great Britain delivering high quality modern clothing at extremely affordable prices, their aim is to source the best textile fabrics to make their range comfortable and stylish. Visit www.houseofkingzclothing.com **51. Tezcustomz** is a unique brand that provides professional custom handpainting service on apparel and accesories. Wearable art that is waterproof and resistant to most liquids. **52. OBSCENE Apparel** represents beating society and being you. This 100% cotton, olive green hoodie has a relaxed fit that will help anyone be comfortable while standing out. Differentiate your style and Conquer $ociety. Follow IG: @obsceneapparel and visit www.obscenesapparel.bigcartel.com **53. Tenden** is a Michigan based menswear and accessories brand started by Todd Hancock. Todd designs and constructs everything himself with style and longevity in mind. Take a look at their full range of products including menswear and accessories at www.tenden.us **54. Vetelli** is no ordinary designer label. Inspired by an Italian great, Leonardo di Vinci, the Vetelli name is synonymous with elegance, luxury, style and creativity. Blending tradition with innovation, the Leo has attention to detail woven into every thread, stitch and material. Packed with compartments and features and extra room for little luxuries, you'll stay organised, always ready. Visit Vetelli.com or find the Vetelli shop on Amazon.co.uk **55.** Rucial Men's bracelet by **LVK Jewelry**, a company committed to giving back to the greater good. With every item sold, $5.00 is donated to the partner charity of the customer's choice. Use discount code GQ10 for 10% off at www.lvkjewelry.com (until stocks last). **56. Skyrta** is an emerging Icelandic brand for discerning men around the world. This half baker shirt is inspired by serendipity on Baker Street, from a team trip to London. Made from fine rung spun cotton developed specially for our denim shirts. Visit www.skyrtaoficeland.com **57.** New brand **Oli X Oliver** specialises in producing premium footwear. Focusing on clean and minimalist designs they pride themselves on offering quality shoes handmade in Portugal appealing to a variety of ages. Their first capsule collection, released late 2017, has set the bench mark for the future. **58. ORUS CO.** Clothing and accessories brand bringing you the finest quality at a fair price. ORUS also looks to create a connection between everyone who wears their garments. #jointheglobalmovement Get 15% off with code "GQ15" at www.orusclothing.com and ASOS Marketplace @orusco. (expires 31/05/2018). **59. Nicolas Alexander** is a new and distinctive premium men's swimwear brand driven by ambition, inspired by adventure and tailored for the sun. All of their unique and vibrant prints are designed in-house and are perfect for those who refuse to blend in! Featured is the Nomad Swim Short in Gaudi Print from their upcoming SS18 Collection, available online now as part of an exclusive and limited pre-release. Visit www.nicolasalexanderswimwear.com

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The Style File... Continued

60

GROWN UP YOUNG, TERRY O´NEILL
€135
LIMITATO
WWW.LIMITATO.SHOP

61

NPS HEATH BROGUE DERBY BOOT
IN WALNUT £235
NPS SHOES
WWW.NPS-SHOES.COM

62

SUNGLASSES MADE IN FRANCE €165
PANTOS PARIS
WWW.PANTOS-PARIS.COM
INSTAGRAM: @PANTOSPARIS

63

VENICE POCKET SQUARE AND BOW TIE
NICE TIES FINISH LAST
WWW.NICETIESFINISHLAST.COM.AU
IG: @NICETIESFINISHLAST

64

N2 BLACK £35
IMOSSI LONDON
WWW.IMOSSI.LONDON
IG: @IMOSSI.LONDON

65

SUPIMA LONG SLEEVE V NECK T-SHIRT £39
WWW.THECOTTONLONDON.COM
IG: @THE.COTTON.LONDON

66

GOLD/BLACK LEATHER 42MM $75
JAMES ECK
WWW.MYJAMESECK.COM
IG: MYJAMESECK

67

BLACK (DOUBLE SIDED) SWEATER £40
PLAIN BEAR
WWW.PLAINBEAR.CO.UK
IG: @PLAINBEARUK

68

ERIKSON HOLDALL £249
LEWES ROAD
WWW.LEWES-ROAD.COM
IG: @LEWES_ROAD

69

PRINTED SHIRT €108
VERENA SCHEPPERHEYN
WWW.SHOP-
VERENASCHEPPERHEYN.COM
IG: @VERENASCHEPPERHEYN

71

BLACK & BROWN BUDDHA €29
SPREZZI FASHION
WWW.SPREZZI-FASHION.COM
IG: @SPREZZIFASHION

72

THE MASON BEANIE $24
KING & FIFTH SUPPLY CO
WWW.KINGANDFIFTH.COM
$5 GIFT CARD – CODE "GQB"

70

THE CHARLES (BACKPACK) $300
TREASON TOTING COMPANY
WWW.TREASONTOTINGCO.COM
IG: @TREASONTOTINGCO

73

CARBON SPEED WALLET
THE FRENCHIE CO.
WWW.THEFRENCHIE.CO
IG: @THEFRENCHIECO

74

CLASSIC SNAPBACK $33
PALMERAMIA
WWW.PALMERAMIA.COM
IG: @PALMERAMIA

75

CORINTHIAN HELMET NECKLACE
$340.00
MARCOS DE ANDRADE
WWW.MARCOSDEANDRADE.COM

60. Limitato have partnered up with some of the world's most illustrious artists and photographers. From their collections, they have selected a few artworks and converted them into "Wearable Art". The artwork is printed on a velvet surface that is stitched onto the high quality, double mercerized, cotton jersey. The product is carefully produced in Portugal. **61.** British footwear is amongst the best quality in the world which is why **NPS footwear** will always be hand-made from start to finish in the UK in their Northamptonshire factory. Visit www.nps-shoes.com **62. Pantos Paris** is an artisanal eyewear brand dedicated to the mythic shape Panto. Each frame is 100% Handcrafted in France with Italian acetate and lenses anti-reflection. Free delivery and free return for UK on www.pantos-paris.com **63.** Australian accessories brand **NTFL** was created by two best mates, for men who like to stand out in the crowd. NTFL endeavours to help all men feel confident in their clothes, especially at an occasion. Shop their bold, unique and beautiful ties and accessories at www.nicetiesfinishlast.com.au All items are handmade in Sydney, Australia. **64.** For those who want to carry less; **Imossi** have designed a slim minimalist wallet machined from toughened aluminium which protects your cards from RFID fraud. It's interchangeable coloured straps add an element of fun while securely storing up to 10 cards. And for that special touch, why not have your initials engraved? **65. The Cotton® London** prides itself on understated luxury, using high-end cotton fabrics and an ethical and sustainable basis for their product line. The quintessentially British character of their products exudes timeless tradition. Their ethos is simple, they believe in style that endures, not fast fashion. **66. James Eck** believes that time is our most precious commodity. Created in hopes of being able to connect the value of time with a minimalist timepiece that can suit almost any style. Being conscious of your time is the reminder and message behind each piece. Shop the collection at www.myjameseck.com **67.** Established with the ethos less is more, **Plain Bear** brings a clean style of design to casual wear. Founded by hard graft and a keen eye, the brand has gone from strength to strength in London and beyond. **68.** British brand **Lewes Road** offers high quality clothing and accessories, without ever compromising their environmental footprint. Pictured is the Erikson Holdall, handmade from recycled leather, a classic piece aimed to inspire your inner explorer. Visit www.lewes-road.com **69. Verena Schepperheyn** is an award-winning contemporary fashion brand specialised in creating mid-range luxury products with a focus on detail, quality and material uniqueness. Shop online at www.shop-verenaschepperheyn.com **70. Treason Toting Co.** inspires the tenacious to explore the world and their limits. They create travel bags and accessories that allow users to embrace their journey, carry their stories, and brave the unknown. Treason Toting products are manufactured with high-quality materials in Baltimore, Maryland and are inspired by local craftsmanship. **71. Sprezzi Fashion** is a young German brand creating trendsetting bracelets made from natural stone beads and stainless steel. Their one and only mission is to take your outfit to the next level, without breaking the bank. **72. King & Fifth** specialises in high quality beanies for the stylish guy. Get $5 OFF your first order with code "GQB" (Expires 31/07/2018). The Lightweight Collection will beat the heat. Worldwide shipping $6. **73.** Featuring the Carbon Speed Wallet from **The Frenchie Co.**, an accessories and lifestyle brand that has been improving the lives of over 28K customers worldwide with its innovative, stylish and unprecedented designs. The Frenchie Co. offers top quality products that perfectly combine style and functionality. **74. PalmEraMia.** Enjoy the hat that represents the perfect streetwear look through simple elegance, from the brand with a charitable mindset. 10% of profits are donated to help those without access to clean water around the world. Take a look at www.palmeramia.com for their full collection. **75. Marcos de Andrade.** Fierce and luxurious as the ancient Corinthian men, the Corinthian Helmet necklace is made from Sterling Silver and embellished with Jet Black Swarovski crystals.

WALNUT WOOD X GOLD
CHRISTIAN VALENTIN
WWW.CHRISTIANVALENTIN.COM
IG: @CHRISTIAN.VALENTIN.OFFICIAL

CALIFORNIA HOODIE $135
SILVER LINING BESPOKE
WWW.SILVERLININGBESPOKE.COM
IG: @SILVERLININGBESPOKE

STERLING SILVER KNOT BAND £70
SIR STAG
WWW.SIRSTAG.COM

TRAVELER'S WOOD SUNGLASSES $85
TRAVELER SUPPLY CO.
WWW.TRAVELERSUPPLYCO.COM

JACKSON WAYNE BRIEFCASE $499
JACKSON WAYNE
WWW.JACKSONWAYNE.COM

MILE HIGH DITTY BAG $300
COLORED RED LEATHER GOODS
WWW.COLOREDREDLEATHERGOODS.COM
IG: @COLOREDREDLEATHERGOODS

JOHN HOWARD SWIMTRUNKS
WWW.JOHNHOWARDCR.COM
IG: @JOHN.HOWARDCR

YUNEEK LION £40
YUNEEK FASHION
WWW.YUNEEK.CO.UK
IG: @YUNEEK_FASHION

76. Christian Valentin is an eponymous watch brand, inspired by the designer Christian Valentin's love of sailing. The unique, luxurious Walnut face reflects the brands simple, high quality aesthetic. Stylish, yet classy, this watch embraces convenience and luxury. Visit www.christianvalentin.com and follow @christian.valentin.official (IG). **77. Silver Lining Bespoke** makes quality outerwear and apparel lined with brilliant paintings by talented emerging artists. A percentage of profits supports the arts and youth education. Designed and made in California. Take a look at www.silverliningbespoke.com or contact info@silverliningbespoke.com **78.** In a world full of copycats, stop sacrificing your style with the cookie cutter approach. Be original. **Sir Stag.** Men's jewellery with horns. Take a look at this unique range from an Australian Artisan Jeweller now at www.sirstag.com or contact gq@sirstag.com **79.** Look good. Feel good. **Traveler**'s Wood Sunglasses are 100% polarized, UV-400 protected. Made from durable skateboard wood, the sunglasses are also so lightweight, they can float on water. The flex hinges are sturdy and designed to hold their shape year after year. Each pair comes with a wooden carrying case. For more details, visit www.travelersupplyco.com **80. Colored Red Leather Goods** strive to make goods suitable for various ages and styles. In this day in age, the majority of goods are mass produced and of poor quality. They take great pride in their work, so you know that your goods are going to last for years to come. Each piece is hand cut, hand assembled and hand stitched. **81.** Swimtrunks by **John Howard** Premium clothing designed and handcrafted in Costa Rica. Each JH's piece is inspired by key elements of Costa Rica, such as its culture, flora, fauna, and microclimates. Look sharp. Live smart. With JH's ethical collections. Visit www.johnhowardcr.com **82.** Inspired by old school American craftsmanship, **Jackson Wayne** makes heirloom quality leather bags and wallets using the finest vegetable tanned full grain leather. Their clean, heritage design aesthetic is both rugged and refined. Handcrafted in the USA and sold directly to customers without typical retail markup. Take a look at www.jacksonwayne.com or contact info@jacksonwayne.com **83. Yuneek Fashion** is an exclusive clothing brand Instagram sensation. This exciting range of premium wear offers a fresh look with detailed printing and colour. Take a look at www.yuneek.co.uk or email sales@yuneek.co.uk

Kitted Out... All The Gear!

1. Wolf and Grizzly designs tools for the wayfarer, strong enough for the woods, sophisticated enough for the city. Seen here is the M1 Grill kit, made from 304 Stainless Steel throughout for wilderness strength with an elegant aesthetic. The rollable surface means you can collapse it down to the width of your water bottle and the grill height can be adjusted to accommodate any fire you can light up. Get inspired at **www.wolfandgrizzly.com**

2. Leomicci is a luxury men's athletic clothing company that specialises in high-end compression wear and track suits. Made in Huntington Beach, California, their pieces are worn by NBA players, pro athletes and entertainers. Sold exclusively at **www.leomicci.com**

3. These ponchos from **The People's Poncho** are your new go-to waterproof weapon of choice. Made from high quality Japanese polyester they stay bone dry for hours out in the rain. Ideal for your cycling commute, dog walking, backpacking/travelling or heading to festivals and for only £50. Take a look at **www.thepeoplesponcho.co.uk** or on Instagram **@thepeoplesponcho**

4. The award-winning **Ahooga** Hybrid Bike is the world first electric-yet-hyper lightweight, folding-yet-highly-efficient bike. Folding, thus intermodal. For better cities, better lives. Unlike most e-bikes, when the assistance is off, the Ahooga remains a lightweight bicycle, easy and fun to ride. It has already been delivered to hundreds of happy riders throughout Europe. Designed with love in Belgium. Made in Europe. Visit **www.ahooga.bike**

5. The Dharma Pants by **OHMME** (£55) are truly a hero product. Available in blue, grey, black and graphite (pictured in the article), they are designed to make you feel comfortable for all types of practices. Highly adjustable with a great grip, you can pull them up your leg for a 3/4 length and a tighter feel, or keep them down to maintain heat in practice and provide grip for balances. Use code GQM10 to get 10% off – exclusive for GQ readers (expires 05/05/2018). Visit **www.ohmme.com**

6. CHAPTER2 TERE. C2 is a new performance road-bike brand designed in New Zealand and the TERE is their first model. TERE means "be quick, swift and fast" in Maori, and it certainly is that. Available as a frameset (rim or disc brake) on **www.chapter2bikes.com** from £1649. Contact **info@chapter2.co.nz** for more info.

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TO ADVERTISE CALL 020 7499 9080 X3705

Back To the Future... Tech Savvy!

1. The team at **BlackPods** has developed a custom painting process specifically for Apple's AirPods. Every pair of customised AirPods they produce is hand-finished by a team of skilled artisans. Their finishing procedure utilises the latest in solvent-based painting technology to yield a luxurious, bespoke product. Customers may either purchase AirPods through them or send a pair for customisation. Visit **www.blackpods.store** for more information, and be sure to use code 'GQ2018' at checkout for a £20 discount (expires 30/04/18).

2. Berrolia No. 1 is a premium car holder with charging capability. Each and every individual piece is hand-crafted from the highest quality materials – Italian full-grain leather and stainless steel. It enables drivers to insert and operate the phone with just one hand at any time. Its design ensures that the phone can start getting charged within seconds of entering a vehicle. Visit **www.berrolia.com** for more information and to purchase.

3. Zorpads are ultra-thin shoe inserts that destroy bacteria and absorb odor at the source. Stick them in any shoe and let the groundbreaking NASA-tested technology spruce up your kicks for up to 60 wears. Pro tip: you can also place them in sports equipment, gym bags, refrigerators and garbage cans. Available at $5 per pair at **www.zorpads.com** or contact **info@zorpads.com**

4. KitSound's stunning new smart speaker, Voice One, is packed full of features from the 20 Watt drivers offering stunning Hi-Fi sound, the stain-resistant Nano coating protecting against little splashes, to the multi-room technology, allowing you to connect up to 8 speakers to distribute songs all over the home via Wi-Fi. In collaboration with Amazon and featuring Alexa Voice Service, The Voice One has had an audio overhaul thanks to the KitSound engineers, giving you a smart speaker with soul that will completely rock your socks off. **#TalkToMe** £129.00 at **www.kitsound.co.uk**

5. Created and designed by FZ Engineering, a company based in Montreal Canada, using revolutionary 3D printing technologies and special high quality materials. **Uclip** is the one and only universal clip for mobile devices. Light, stable, easy to use, Uclip hooks on to your everyday life and offers infinite positioning possibilities! How do you #Uclip? Take a look at **www.uclip.ca** or contact **info@uclip.ca**

6. BAK London have created a range of elegant leather phone cases and accessories. Handcrafted from premium lightweight materials, they are available in a variety of stylish colours and textures such as the featured yellow ostrich and green croc pattern iPhone X cases, only £45 at **www.baklondon.com** IG: **@baklondon**

7. Swedish headphone developer **Jays** recently launched one of the world's smallest wireless earphones with the impressive battery life of 12 hours. a-Six Wireless features CNC milled aluminium housing and trouble-free wireless connection. Now available at **jaysheadphones.com** with free worldwide shipping.

8. Gear4. If you're looking to keep your iPhone stylishly protected, Knightsbridge provides impeccable impact resistance. Made from genuine leather, hand wrapped over impact absorbing material, this case is light, slim and refined. Visit **www.gear4.com** or their Instagram **@gear4**

Spring Forward ... The Gift Of Time!

1960'S GIRARD-PERREGAUX
DEEP DIVER $9,500
STETZ & CO. WATCHES
WWW.STETZCOWATCHES.COM
IG: @STETZCOWATCHES

ULYSSES DEEP BLUE €399
THE TOC WATCH
WWW.THETOCWATCH.COM
IG: @THETOCWATCH

LA CRÈME $250
MARGAUX & CAMILLA
WWW.MARGAUXANDCAMILLA.COM
IG: @MARGAUXANDCAMILLA

LUNAR SMARTWATCH £228
WWW.LUNAR-SMARTWATCH.COM

AMANT WATCHES
WWW.AMANTWORLD.COM
IG: @AMANTWORLD

THE CHRONO
BLUE SILVER WATCH €139
PAUL RICH
WWW.EU.PAUL-RICH.COM
IG: @PAULRICHWATCHES

1. Founder and collector Joshua Rankin built **Stetz & Co. Watches** as an outlet for his passion and a way to share quality vintage timepieces and their stories with others. A stroll through the carefully curated online shop will turn up an eclectic mix of purpose built tool watches, precision chronometers, brand milestones and barn finds, with a diverse and ever-changing inventory. Visit www.stetzcowatches.com to view the collection. **2. Ulysses Deep Blue by The Toc Watch.** Striking the perfect balance between a casual and dress watch, Toc launches their 2nd watch, the Ulysses, with a crazy introductory offer for 35 days; an automatic watch for under €210 (£185 approx). There is even a style option for everyone. No wonder Toc has been worn worldwide by Bloggers, Rugby and NBA Players. **3. Margaux & Camilla**, a brother-sister design team, brings a new twist to watch design. Fusing Alcantara, ambient lighting, sapphire glass and a quality Swiss Movement to create a watch that is both easy on the eye and wallet – without compromising on craftsmanship! Visit www.margauxandcamilla.com **4. LunaR Smartwatch.** Designed for outdoor enthusiasts, avid travelers and lifestyle watch aficionados, LunaR features a sleek design that offers infinite power via solar charging, dual time-zone, and discreet notifications for sunset/sunrise, apps and calls through LED's around the dial. It also tracks activity and sleep. **5. Paul Rich** offers timeless modern classic watches. Presented here is the Chrono Blue Silver, made from stainless steel and crafted with an interchangeable genuine leather watchband. See more at eu.paul-rich.com **6. Amant Watches.** A new Swiss icon is born, probably the most exciting news from Baselworld and it's under €300. This masterpiece has the spirit of Côte d'Azur with a Swiss beating heart made by world-renowned ETA. Amant also introduced a new sustainable line of bespoke fitted Polos, this is the future of fashion. Explore more on www.amantworld.com

7.

BLACK REMBRANDT $94.99
WORTELBOER WATCH
WWW.WORTELBOERWATCH.COM
IG: @WORTELBOERWATCH

8.

ORIGINAL MONARCH £74.99
AION WATCH COMPANY
WWW.AIONWATCHCO.COM
IG: @AIONWATCHES

9.

SQ38 PLANO WATCH, PS-99 $265
SQUARESTREET
WWW.SQUARESTREET.SE
IG: @SQUARESTREET

10.

KARIBU WATCHES £195
WWW.KARIBUWATCHES.COM
QUOTE GQ10 FOR 10% OFF

11.

OCEAN NAVIGATOR £899
OCEAN CRAWLER WATCH CO.
WWW.OCEANCRAWLER.COM
IG: @OCEANCRAWLERWATCHCO

12.

Nº 172 £159
CATE & NELSON WATCHES
WWW.CATENELSONWATCHES.COM

13.

THE SPIRE $350
FIN WATCHES
WWW.FINWATCHES.COM
IG: @FINWATCHES

14.

KARL-LEIMON
WWW.KARLLEIMONWATCHES.COM

15.

MODEST CREAM £491
BLEAU WATCHES
WWW.BLEAUWATCHES.COM
IG: @BLEAUWATCHES

16.

DANDYLINE €419
MAKELØS
WWW.MAKELOS.DE

17.

SUNRISE $122
SIR DOUGLAS WATCHES
WWW.SIRDOUGLASWATCHES.COM
IG: @SIRDOUGLASWATCHES

7. The **Wortelboer Watch** brand was born out of the need to help impoverished children around the world to get better access to education, health, and resources. A Wortelboer watch helps you connect with the timeless virtue of bringing positive change to our world. **8. Aion Watch Company** have one clear ambition, to combine simplistic design and quality materials to create timeless watches that can be worn at any occasion. Buy online at www.aionwatchco.com **9. Squarestreet** watches, born in Stockholm 2010 and now headquartered in Hong Kong. Founded by Swedish designer Alexis Holm and watch collector William Cheung. Dedicated to perfection, elegance and the creation of new Classics. **10. KARIBU Watches** give a modern twist to the classic Pilot's Watch. This robust yet elegant watch combines premium British design with Swiss-movement, featuring 10atm water resistance and Scratch Proof Sapphire Crystal glass. An adventurous timepiece that will take you from office to airport in style. Quote 'GQ10' for 10% off at www.karibuwatches.com (expires 30/04/2018). **11. Ocean Crawler**'s new Ocean Navigator is a patented dive watch using a unique three crown case, Sapphire Bezel, Internal Solar Compass and an automatic Swiss movement. **12. Cate & Nelson** is a London-based design duo with heritage from Sweden and Spain. Their newly launched watch brand reflects the sobriety and honesty of Scandinavian design.This timepiece features a stainless steel case, dark brown organic leather strap, domed hardened mineral glass and a Swiss made movement. Visit www.catenelsonwatches.com for more. Free worldwide shipping. **13. Fin Watches.** Your time is valuable – your watch should speak to that. The Spire's unique red 24-hour hand counts down the hours of the day, reminding you to make every second count. Modern philosophy wrapped in a classic design, the Spire by Fin Watches is available for pre-orders for $350. **14. Karl-Leimon.** The "affordable luxury" watch brand with classic watch design at its core. Co-founders Karl and Leimon are two watch connoisseurs and the co-founders of Karl-Leimon watches. Long unsatisfied by both the overwhelming trend of minimalism and over-complexity in contemporary watch design, they decided to bring together the classic vintage-look and Japanese manufacturing to people at an affordable price. After the launch of their first model in USA and Japan in 2017, the brand has received overwhelming support from watch lovers. The founders will continue to bring out new models that reflect their passion for classic design at top Made-in-Japan quality. **15. Bleau Watches** is a young Australian brand with a focus on traditional mechanical dress watches with Swiss movements. Using high quality materials such as alligator straps, enamel dials and flame-blued hands they don't compromise on the overall value proposition. The Modest range has three colour options and start at £404. **16. Makeløs.** The DANDYLINE is inspired by historical dandy, a man of simple, refined elegance. They have combined very high-quality materials in an inconspicuous design. In addition, they have found a way to offer top quality materials at low prices. €419 at www.makelos.de or email team@makelos.de for more information. **17. Sir Douglas Watches.** Traditional concept watches that shows both distinctive design and expression as well as the classic watch codes. The stainless steel case features a minimalist elegance with a domed mineral glass. All designs are waterproof to 5ATM and the classically shaped gold plated hands complete the elegant appearance.

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On The Rocks... Bottom's Up!

1. The best awarded Colombian rum. **LA HECHICERA**, Spanish for 'enchantress', has been seducing rum lovers and whisky experts with its perfectly dry and mellow taste. Produced by the only family owned rum company in Colombia, this jewel of a spirit holds true to a simple promise; from barrel to bottle, and nothing added in between. Find them at Marks & Spencer, Harrods, Fortnum & Mason and at **www.lahechicera.co**

2. Produced by the independent, Scottish-owned **Isle of Arran Distillery**, the Arran 18 year-old Single Malt is perfect for the whisky aficionado who is looking for something that can't be found on every supermarket shelf. It is handcrafted in small batches to ensure maximum quality. Luscious tropical notes, coconut and sweet spice make this a luxurious dram which can be enjoyed on its own or with a drop of water. An exclusive Single Malt from one of Scotland's most forward-thinking distilleries. Available from specialist whisky shops, from **ww.arranwhisky.com** or call **01770 830264** to order.

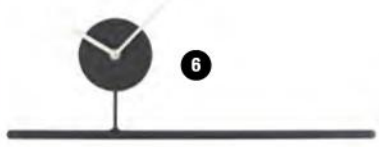
3. Inspired by Nature. Led by Science. Crafted by Hand. These are the principles which have prompted the creation of a new luxury spirit from Manchester – **Worsley Gin**. A closely guarded secret blend of botanicals sets this apart from its other London Dry counterparts, where the botanicals have been selected for their molecular structure for ultimate compatibility. Distilled using a unique, small batch single distillation process creating an incredible flavour journey. Encased in a stunning diamond shaped Italian glass bottle with exquisite branding makes this Gin a must buy for the real connoisseur. Available from **www.worsleygin.co.uk**

4. Duck and Crutch is a London ("Kensington") Dry Gin manually produced in a 6ft x 4ft shed, by self-taught distillers and entrepreneurs, George and Hollie. Founded in the heart of Kensington, the spirit is a Juniper-heavy, warm and smooth gin with hints of spice and a Darjeeling tea finish. Serve over ice with tonic and fresh thyme. Available for £50 at **www.duckandcrutch.co.uk** or email **george@duckandcrutch.co.uk** for more information.

5. Icelandic Mountain Spirits. Inspired by the old Icelandic saga of the Guardians of Iceland. The Gold Medal winner Icelandic Mountain Vodka and the Eagle Gin are the newest addition to Costco here in the UK. Visit **www.icelandicmountainvodka.is**

6. Savage Vines deliver wines from independent family owned vineyards straight to your door. Not only do members get epic wines, the Savage community have access to exclusive restaurant deals with some of London's hippest establishments and badass playlists to accompany their wines via their Spotify Channel – Savage FM. Find out more about the number 1 wine subscription on earth at **www.savagevines.co.uk** and use coupon code 'GQSAVAGE' on checkout for your 4th box for free (expires 31/08/2018).

Man Of The House ... King Of the Castle!



1. The new Galatine chef knife series from **Edge of Belgravia** is inspired by Sir Gawain's sword, Galatine. This is an all steel range with a jet-black finish and a stylish angular handle design. Full 7pc chef knife set only £129.90, with accompanying knife block at £79.90. GQ readers get an exclusive discount code with 'GQ25' at checkout (expires 31/05/18). Visit **www.edgeofbelgravia.co.uk** to view the full range.

2. Pullman Editions designs striking original limited-edition posters that capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and historic automobiles. Over 100 designs available at £395 each. Call **020 7730 0547** or view and buy online at **www.pullmaneditions.com**

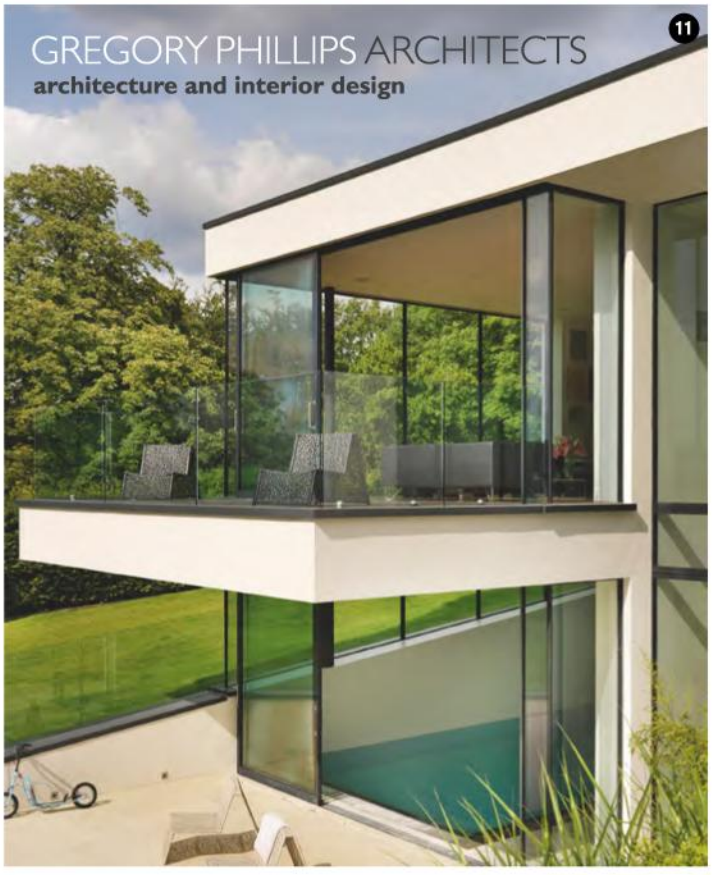
3. Emerald Dove, a new interpretation to the cushion and scented home accessories experience. Their bespoke collections fuse Indian style, heritage and culture to weave tales of past and present traditions and bring new narrative to both period and contemporary homes alike. View the collection at **www.emerald-dove.london** or contact on **sales@emerald-dove.london**

4. EPJ Interior Design. Founded by designer, Emily Johnson. The East London based luxury design studio creates effortlessly cool interiors and offers a complete bespoke service – leaving no detail untouched. Art and creativity being at the heart of the brand, Emily is able to provide some of the most exclusive art pieces for her clients through her strong connections in the industry. Call **07714 444434** or visit **www.epjdesign.com** to get in contact.

5. Liv Dockerty is an American contemporary abstract painter based in Miami. Her artwork titles, often referencing classic rock song lyrics, evoke narratives and emotions, while her bold palette invites the viewer to indulge in the sensual pleasure of colours artfully combined. Visit **www.livdockerty.com** and IG **@livdockerty_art** for more!

6. Lillian Sinclair Design Co. creates timeless home decor for those who cultivate eccentricity. All items are handcrafted in British Columbia and shipped worldwide. Linus Clock (featured) will be exhibited with the geometric bar clock collection at Milan Design Week. Visit **www.lilliansinclair.com** or email **letters@lilliansinclair.com**

7
DRINK LIKE A
LEGEND
"IF I CANNOT DRINK BOURBON AND SMOKE CIGARS IN HEAVEN THAN I SHALL NOT GO."
Bourbon & Boots
www.bourbonandboots.com



7. Bourbon & Boots is a uniquely Southern USA lifestyle brand that exports the southern lifestyle experience to friends, expatriates, and admirers through the sale of rare, unique, handcrafted gifts that celebrate life in the Ole South. Famous Whiskey Legends Etched Rocks Glass Sets, $55 a set. Visit **www.bourbonandboots.com**

8. Jocelyn Claire Burke believes that art is a conversation. By painting memories of places and metaphysical resonances, she hopes that her personal visual language creates connections, touchstones, and entry points that bring our solitary experience closer together. Visit **www.jocelynburke.com** email **jocelyn.burke@gmail.com** IG: **@jocelyn_claire_burke**

9. Caroline Collom is a British born painter based between Australia and the United Kingdom. Collom works primarily with oil paint and hopes to expose an inward and outward trajectory of multiple forms. Pictured here is 'At A Crossroads', 2017, 106.5 x 137cm. Visit **www.carolinecollom.com** or email **carolinecollom@gmail.com** to find out more. Caroline will also be showcasing at The Other Art Fair in London, 22-25th March 2018.

10. EQLight is dedicated to innovate timeless design and immaculately crafted pieces. Seen here is the Brooklyn NY 3 lights pendant from the Industrial Collection. They make beautiful lighting affordable for home and business decoration. More info at **www.eqlight.com**

11. Gregory Phillips Architects. For 25 years, Gregory Phillips Architects have designed beautiful houses that people are proud to call home. From contemporary interiors to new-build architecture, renovation and landscape design. Winners of UK Property Award Best House in UK 2017/18. Gregory Phillips Architects, 17 Savile Row, London W1S 3PN. Call **020 7724 3040** or visit **www.gregoryphillips.com**

12. Hailing from Nashville Tennessee, **Ranger Station** pours candles that help you stop being busy by giving you multiple ways to relax. These nature-inspired scents, mixed in soy wax, are poured into sturdy whiskey glasses which can be used long after the life of the candle. Take a look at the scents they offer, for only £36 at **www.rangerstation.co** or email **hello@rangerstation.co** to find out more.

13. Greta Claire is an abstract contemporary artist whose art has no boundaries. Her art will "wake you up and slap you in the face – this life is for livin', folks". She's bright, she's bold, she loves texture! For more information, visit **gretaclaire.com** or check out her IG: **@gretacat**

14. I AM Dimitri is an extremely talented contemporary artist. Inspired by pop and street culture, his digital and mixed media works have been composed using layered textures and sprays. This unique method brings his portraits to life. Private commissions also available, visit **www.iamdimitri.co.uk** IG: **@iamdimitri.co.uk**

15. Seen here is the Synk with Zinc top. High quality birch plywood legs and frame make this table strong as well as beautiful. **Rigg** manufactures a wide range of other products including coffee tables and desks in Birmingham, UK. Take a look at **www.rigg.uk** or call **0800 6510001** for more information.

16. Axel Vindenes is an artist from Bergen, Norway. He is inspired by Edvard Munch, Henri Matisse, Mark Rothko and Picasso. This image is his band Kakkmaddafakka's latest album cover titled 'Hus'. Visit **www.axelvindenesstudio.com** or email **contact@axelvindenesstudio.com** to find out more.

17. Tamara Nelson is a Newport Beach, California based artist. Working from concept to fabrication, her work has been featured in residential and commercial projects including commissions for hotels and casinos in Las Vegas and California. Tamara offers originals, custom commissions, and prints on fine art papers, metal and acrylic. Her featured piece is "Nebula" Resin on Birch. Visit **www.tamaranelsonart.com** email **tamara@tamaranelsonart.com** or call **+1 949 510 6602**.

18. Award-winning portrait artist with a twist, **Celia Burbush** produces collections based on relaxed interviews with clients, during which she takes them on a journey through the home of their dreams, past or future. Celia distils these stories into enigmatic original artworks using her unique method and style. Visit **www.celiaburbush.com** or call **01900 827041 / 07799 627804** for commissions.

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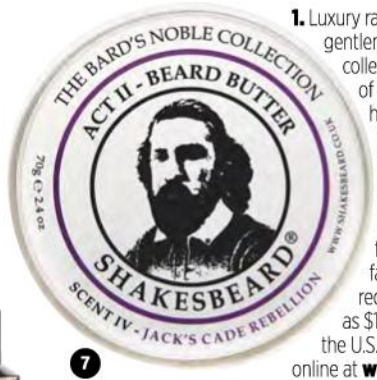
Grooming Marvellous... Feeling Fresh!



1. Luxury razors and shaving brushes for discerning gentlemen by **Wilde & Harte**. Their grooming collections are inspired by the styles and grandeur of iconic houses and palaces in London. Expertly handcrafted in England for the perfect, indulgent shave. Purchase at **www.wildeandharte.co.uk**

2. Fresh Beards, a family owned and operated company, handcrafts some of the finest beard care products on the market. Their famous beard butter moisturises, can help to reduce itch and softens the feel of hair for as little as $16.99. Fresh Beards products are produced in the U.S.A. and shipped all over the world. Get yours online at **www.freshbeards.com** and Barbershops/ Salons across the United States.

3. Charlemagne Premium Beard Oils are made using the highest quality ingredients, such as argan, jojoba, almond and grapeseed oils. These oils will nourish with moisture and soften the feel of your beard – they have also been awarded first place on German quality tests. Each bottle is £22.50 and they are available through **www.charlemagne-premium.com** and via Amazon Prime.

4. Shaving needn't be a scream, when you are bristly like a coconut husk. Use **Ashanti Cosmetics** 'Husk My Dear' shaving cream. They've blended a generous amount of Shea Butter together with Coconut Oil and mega soothing Kaolin Clay to keep your cheeks feeling soft and healthy. Shop exclusively online and use code '#GQ' on **www.ashanticosmeticsltd.com** for a 10% discount (expires 31/05/18).

5. Bearded Lads was created as a movement for all gentlemen who care about their appearance. Those who like to maintain their mane on a daily basis in a healthy yet stylish manner. Their Beard Oil is natural and made with high grade oils such as Marula Oil, Argan Oil, Jojoba, and essential oils. Priced at $18.99. Visit **www.beardedlads.com** or email **info@beardedlads.com** for more information.

6. The Nordic success **Nõberu of Sweden** are dedicated to more than just selling quality products – they want to change the market and the way society thinks about men's grooming. The hair series contains everything from waxes, shampoos to volumizing sprays and more. Visit **www.noberu.se**

7. Unleash the rebel within, with this rich fruity fragranced premium conditioning beard butter from **SHAKESBEARD®.** An eclectic mix of fig, slightly sweetened with plum and apricot, not forgetting a dash of cedarwood and cassis. A must have for all style conscious Bromeo's! Exclusive 20% discount for GQ readers with code: 'GQREBEL20' (expires 08/06/2018) View the full range at **www.shakesbeard.co.uk**

8. This beard and face oil from **UBIQUITY Beards** helps control itchiness, and beard flakes and gives a subtle looking sheen. Utilising high-quality natural ingredients, this oil conditions, softens, and tames beards of all lengths leaving a slight hint of fragrance. Shop at **www.ubiquitybeards.co.uk**

9. Stiofanpadraigcrafts started out as a hobby, stemming from a love of all things crafted from wood. All their products are handmade and designed in Donegal, Ireland using native and exotic woods. What better way to start your year than with a custom-made grooming set. Seen here is the Irish Bog Oak Wood Shaving Set for £70, find it at **www.stiofanpadraigcrafts.com**

10. Friedrich by **Van Beesley** is a strong and long-lasting hair wax for men that creates a unique texture. It contains hair-nourishing ingredients such as argan oil and hydrolyzed wheat protein. Friedrich has a natural matte finish that makes the hair look and feel healthy. The product is designed and made in Germany and available at **www.van-beesley.com** for £67 or contact **info@van-beesley.com**

11. MR. Jamie Stevens. MR. Thickening Anti-Dandruff Shampoo, £12.00. An advanced haircare system to help combat the appearance of thinning hair. This shampoo contains an active thickening complex for stronger feeling, thicker looking hair. MR. Anti-Dandruff Shampoo cleanses, removes and aids the prevention of further dandruff build-up, whilst System-PPX™ helps weak roots to feel stronger. To find out more visit **www.mrjamiestevens.com**

12. A unique formula containing natural active ingredients – presenting the **Frénésies** hair growth prevention cream. It is a natural alternative to removing unwanted hair whilst having a soothing effect on the skin. Rich in menthol, rosemary and chamomile, which help calm the skin and leave a feeling of freshness. Visit **www.frenesies.com**

13. Beard. Shave. Tattoo. Whatever your look, **Modern Day Duke** has got you covered. Luxurious and UK made, it's one of the nations best loved alternative grooming brands. Featured this month; The highly rated 100% natural Shave Cream for sensitive skin. Use code 'GQ-ONLY' for 15% discount at **www.moderndayduke.co.uk** or contact **sales@mgessentials.co.uk** (expires 30/06/2018).

14. Since 1854, **Taylor of Old Bond Street** have produced and sold the finest in Luxury Men's Grooming Products and accessories, creating a brand which is synonymous with British style and quality. Visit their store at 74 Jermyn Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6NP, call **020 7930 5544** or visit them at **www.tayloroldbondst.co.uk**

15. Uncut Standards. They enjoy making exceptional grooming products for exceptional men. Each item is handmade with raw ingredients and essential oils, to keep you looking classy above the collar. Set your own standards. To check out their full lineup go to **www.uncutstandards.com**

16. Touch Of Herbs. This Bourbon Beard Oil priced at $12.90 was designed with a smooth texture while offering a softening and taming feel. Boosting your beards conditioning and hydration. With a scent that leaves a lasting impression. Find this amazing product at **www.touchofherbs.com** or email **info@touchofherbs.com**

17. Partner your **Dorco** Classic razor with the new Shave Gel and get closer to that perfect shave. The Dorco Classic Shave Gel Kit comes with the Dorco Classic razor and its 7 precision-aligned blades, 5 Refill cartridges and the new Shave Gel. Enjoy a 10% discount on all products by entering "DORCO10" at **www.razorsbydorco.co.uk** (expires 30/04/18).

18. The organic skincare brand **Reluxury** have launched a unique beard oil for men's grooming. Containing 6 natural ingredients, including Ylang Ylang, to give a sensational floral smell. The oil conditions the beard, helping it to feel stronger and improving performance. It also keeps the beard looking moisturized with a few drops a day. Suitable for all skin types. Head to **www.reluxury.co.uk** and follow them on Instagram **@reluxuryonline**

19. Drifter's opening eyes with their unorthodox, yet impressive approach to men's grooming. They create all-natural, handmade products with ingredients like hops, avocado oil, coconut, and charcoal. The entire line's inspired by the craft alcohol industry and even made with craft beer/spirits. El Dorado Whiskey Soap $8 at **www.driftergrooming.com**

20. MaBeard White lightning is a sweet, Southern delight with an "intoxicating" blend of Tennessee whiskey and a touch of caramel so you don't smell like a drunk. It's as smooth as Tennessee whiskey, as sweet as strawberry wine, and as warm as a glass of brandy. Visit **www.mabeard.com**

21. J. Marcel Beard Company, based out of Washington, DC is a men's beard and skincare line. Known for their handcrafted Beard Balm, the J. Marcel Beard Company also offers beard oil and beard soaps to keep your beard clean and conditioned. Visit **www.jmarcelbeardco.com**

22. Admiral Grooming's Soothing Beard Wash preserves the youth of facial hair, making it look clean and feel soft. It locks in moisture to stop hair appearing dry and brittle. 50% off for GQ readers using code "GQWASH" (expires 30/06/18) at **www.admiralgroooming.co.uk**

23. Handcrafted in the rugged wilderness of Alberta, Canada, **HARD Bar Soap Co.** offers those who #LiveHARD an all-natural, chemical-free complete line of products with a variety of irresistibly masculine scents. Visit **hardbarsoapco.com** to order yours today! Or email **info@hardbarsoapco.com**

24. Selvedge Grooming. Glossing pomade designed to impart just the right amount of shine, creating the appearance of perfectly textured hair. Vitamins and bamboo extract help to provide a lustrous look whilst nourishing the hair with moisture, minus the greasiness. Provides a weightless, stronger feeling hold. Formulated without Parabens, Sulfates and a bunch of other nasty chemicals. Available now at **www.selvedgegrooming.com** or contact **info@selvedgegrooming.com** for more information.

25. Vitabiotics. Whether you're a working dad or a fitness enthusiast, Wellman Energy is perfect for those leading hectic lives. The great tasting refreshing drink includes vitamins B6 and B12, magnesium and iron which contribute to normal energy release and help to reduce tiredness and fatigue. With specialist nutrients including Siberian Ginseng extract and Co-Q10, the easy to carry effervescent tablets also include vitamin C and zinc which contribute to normal immune system function. Visit **www.vitabiotics.com**

DORCO
SHAVE
GEL
Enjoy a smooth and comfortable shave with the new Dorco shave gel, perfect for those with sensitive skin.
150 ml

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Grooming Marvellous... Continued

26. MR. Grooming Den creates the ultimate luxury grooming experience. Using only the finest ingredients, they cater to premium men, who want and expect the best from life and from their skin. Pure. Premium. Classic. Luxury. Visit, **www.mrgroomingden.com**

27. White Glo Diamond Series Whitening System. Their strongest system yet, formulated by dentists to ensure fast and effective results. Diamond Series Whitening System five minute application works to lift stains and remove yellowing on the surface of teeth enamel safely and without abrasion. Also comes with bonus White Glo Professional Choice Toothpaste for daily maintenance and anti-cavity protection. With such an easy way to whiten your teeth, there is no excuse not to get the Glo! More info at **www.whiteglo.com**

28. Northern Ruff Co.'s Beard Wash will invigorate your senses with the refreshing scents of peppermint, lime and tea-tree. Gently cleansing yet thoroughly moisturising, your beard will reap the benefits of a naturally hand-crafted product designed uniquely with you in mind! Available now at **www.northernruff.com** or Email **ben@northernruff.com #northernruffco**.

White Glo

29. Midwest Best Grooming Co. The one scent to rule them all! Njord Imperial Beard Oil is designed to blend the power and sheen of the Norse God of strength and the sea into handcrafted beard balms! A perfect combination of masculine ruggedness and a sages understanding! Visit **www.mwbgroomingco.com**

30. Bearded Destruction is more than just beards but a movement of bearded brethren striving to crush goals and achieve success. Their high quality oils and essential oils will help your beard achieve optimum health on your path of beardom. Grow your beard and reach success the Bearded Destruction Way at **www.beardeddestruction.com**

With Love... From Me to You!

1. Clara In Wonderland is a small company from Tuscany. The creator of the line is Clara Longobardo. Each piece is hand made by Italian seamstresses. They believe in making unique and timeless items. See her at a pop-up show in Milan in June, or visit **www.clarainwonderland.com** or her IG: **@clarainwonderland** to see more.

2. Krisana Vigus Facial Toner is a luxurious anti-ageing product that can help to make skin feel tighter and appear smoother whilst helping to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Visit **www.krisanavigus.com** to find out more.

3. Willow & Grey Jewelry focuses on creating modern jewellery styles using quality materials. Designed and made in the heart of Canada, each piece in their collections can be worn for any event to update your style or to give you that unique look. Seen here are the beautiful Mila Necklace – the perfect way to treat yourself or a loved one. Visit **www.willowandgreyjewelry.com**

4. al.tru.ist is a New York based fine edge fine jewellery line epitomising temporal designs with a unique personal aesthetic. Shown here is the Bonaparte Diamond Ring in 14kt gold, made with conflict free and ethically responsible diamonds. Available at **www.altruist.nyc** or follow **@altruist.nyc** on Instagram to see the full collection.

5. Inception of Beauty is a recently launched cosmetic line from Vancouver, Canada. They are committed to creating the highest quality makeup line to help empower individuals all around the world. Their line ranges from mink lashes and contour palettes, to makeup brushes. Visit **www.inceptionofbeauty.com** to discover their luxurious products.

6. By Lolita is a New York based jewellery brand, inspired by modern women all over the world. They carry a timeless aesthetic collection that will have you feeling flawless and elegant. Their pieces will unleash your inner goddess! Follow them on Instagram **@bylolitajewelry** or visit **www.ByLolita.com**

7. Debora Ann Malouf, creative designer of **DM Jewelry Designs** creates exquisite pieces that represent a woman's Individuality and exemplify a woman's finest qualities: beauty, strength, intelligence, passion and excitement. Debora explains, "I will design and re-design a piece until it perfectly captures not only my vision, but also the vision of the client who is involved in the entire design process." Visit **www.dmjewelrydesigns.com**

8. Insignia London's certified 100% natural and organic Rosehip oil can help to reduce the appearance of premature ageing. It is packed with ingredients such as vitamin E, vitamin C, vitamin D and B-carotene. This luxurious oil can help your skin appear youthful, radiant and nourished with moisture. Discover more at **www.insignialdn.com**

9. Simon Wright offers a complete bespoke service, making your jewellery in platinum and gold using the finest diamonds and gemstones. An appointment involves viewing stones, a short tour of the workshop, and a sit down design session all in his Clerkenwell studio workshop. By appointment only. Visit **www.sw-jewellery.com** email **enquiries@sw-jewellery.com** or take a look at Instagram **@sw_jewellery**

10. A Box of Happiness is **The Happiness Planner**'s new product line. Each box is themed and comes with a journal, a notebook, a set of worksheets and quote cards designed to help you find your purpose in life. Do you want to wake up every day feeling inspired to pursue your life's calling? This Box can help you get one step closer to that. Visit **www.thehappinessplanner.co.uk**

11. Cherry & the Bees (Macarons & Lingerie), a French and British young brand, create adorable and unique lingerie-pastries inspired by British afternoon tea gatherings, tasty French macarons and cosy and colourful lingerie. Ms Lace set only £40.00 available at **www.cherryandthebees.com** or email **contact@cherryandthebees.com** for more information.

12. Poporcelain from Copenhagen, Denmark makes beautiful and delicate contemporary porcelain jewellery. Pictured are the Snowdrop Flower Tassel Earrings (€210), created by designer Kay Jiaqi Zhou. The earrings are handmade in unique shape of fine white porcelain and decorated with gold-filled elements. No two petals are exactly the same. Available at **www.poporcelain.com** and follow on IG **@poporcelain_official**

13. Latham & Neve – known for their stunning contemporary hand-made British jewellery since 1997. Featured is the unique Ripple Bangle in beaten silver and 18ct gold, £230.00. Ballroom bangles, everyday earrings, ravishing rings and much much more... Buy online/stockists/brochure, visit **www.lathamandneve.co.uk** or call **01580 753399**.

14. Ying Cai. The New York designer has embraced Eastern elegance with a modern twist. This season's trendy yet eye-catching accessories make great gifts for the Spring season, perfect from day to night. Flower earrings £165, available at **www.yingcainewyork.com**

15. Masinisa. To enhance and maintain your beauty, the 'HENNU' Ghassoul Clay mask is made from natural elements that give the skin a smooth and glowing look. It contains high levels of minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium and Iron. Visit **www.masinisa.com** IG: **@masinisaltd**

16. Spoil her with the luxurious Nourishing Organic Serum from **ELIROSE SKINCARE**. She will thank you for introducing her to an exquisite organic serum that will replenish and moisturise her skin leaving it velvety soft. Certified organic, vegan and cruelty-free. Use code: GQ2018 for 15% off (expires 02/05/2018). Visit **www.eliroseskincare.com**

17. "Luxury Doesn't Have a SIZE" as **Nina Sharae** takes over the world as being an advocate and owner of a luxurious resort and swimwear apparel company for plus size women. Nina Sharae made history in October 2017, by becoming the first plus company to showcase full figure women wearing tasteful swimwear in Accra, Ghana. As Nina continues to break barriers, you can follow or visit **www.ninasharae.com**

18. Say something special with the new Personalised Hammered Open Bangle (from £69) by **Merci Maman.** Each piece of jewellery is hand-engraved with the name, dates or short message of your choice and delivered to you in a signature gift box. Handmade in London and available in sterling silver, 18K gold plated or rose gold. Visit their website at **www.mercimamanboutique.com**

19. New York based artisan and designer **Rose Berger** does not fit into the role of a traditional fashion designer. While her work is as labour intensive and intricate as a lot of couture houses, she does not work with traditional modes of jewellery design or dressmaking. She works with metal, chain links, jump rings and rubber rings. Her work for all intensive purposes falls into the spectrum of functional and wearable art. Visit **www.roseberger.nyc** to view the collection.

20. Natty + CO. The twist stacker ring collection is inspired for every day wear to make you feel special, sexy and confident. Handcrafted in Los Angeles using 14k gold. View more dainty designs at **www.natty-co.com** and follow on IG **@nattyco_**

21. Laura Miers' debut collection from her hand wrought label is dedicated to bringing you a transparent celebration of Australian stones and materials. The K&K Ring is encrusted with a Rough Champagne Diamond from Western Australia and Parti Sapphire from Queensland. Visit **www.lauramiers.com** and follow on IG **@lauramiersjewellery**

22. Menesthò is a luxury, sustainable brand that uses organic and recycled fabrics to create vibrant resort-wear and swimwear. Their unique swimwear designs, handmade in London, use special patterns that can be adjusted to suit even the taller women. Visit **www.menestho.com** or follow **@menestho_official** on IG or FB **Menesthò**

23. Inspired by the "Eternal City" **Roma Designer Jewelry** offers unique pieces of fine Italian design and craftsmanship meant to evoke a sense of effortless elegance and timeless style. Stunning pieces in sterling silver with gold and platinum vermeil. See the collection at **www.romadesignerjewelry.com**

24. This fantastically reviewed skin care range by **Depascal Organic** offers vegan and gluten free products, blended with only the purest organic essentials. All products are paraben, petroleum free and do not contain any harsh additives or chemicals. The Balm can help reduce the appearance of inflamed complexions, scarring and fine lines. Visit **www.depascalorganic.com**

25. Pamela Marie is an internationally published pin-up model based in Milwaukee, Wis. With over 15 years of experience in fashion/design beginning with an interest in historical costuming, she founded her own brand, PMdesigns by Pamela Marie. Debuting in 2016, at 'A Retro Affair' fashion show, we are excited to see what is to come. Pictured is her Jungle Safari dress £210. Visit **www.hollyville.com** or email **hollyvilleboutique@gmail.com** for custom orders. Use promo code: GQ18 for 20% off your next purchase (expires 15/07/18).

26. Originally created as a couple's journey to discover Ayurveda beauty, **Chic Chiq** is an up-and-coming brand with three luxurious natural face masks that help to cleanse and moisturise. Their powder form means you choose when to activate ingredients ensuring maximum freshness. Discover your modern beauty ritual at **www.chicchiq.com** and IG **@chicchiq_beauty**

27. Isabelle Ecker Jewelry proudly presents the stunning sterling silver Crater Ring with sparkling white sapphires. Philadelphia artist Isabelle Ecker creates unique contemporary jewelry for discerning women and men. Her collections of nature-inspired designs stimulate the imagination, and her special commissioned work fulfills each customer's aesthetic vision. IG **@isabelleeckerjewelry**
Visit **www.isabelleeckerjewelry.com**

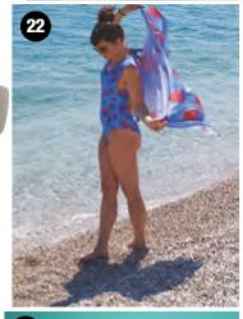
28. Niki Newd*. Gourmet to your skin in the purest form. The unique Niki Newd Skin Cream is custom made with the finest natural ingredients: experience the power of arctic spring water, gorgeous seabuckthorn oil and fresh vitamin C. Always alcohol and preservative free.
Visit **www.nikinewd.com** or email **niki@nikinewd.com**

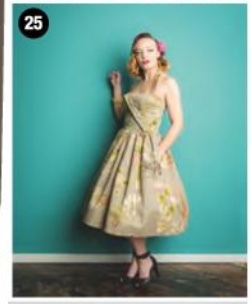
29. Yeba is a women's contemporary accessory label specialising in 'executive' handbags and small leather goods for women. This unique concept where fashion meets functionality in the most elegant way, celebrates today's women's drive, confidence and ambition. They design modern and timeless essentials, high quality leather goods inspired by contemporary aesthetics, clear graphic lines and modern architecture. Visit **www.yeba-essentials.com** or email **info@yeba-essentials.com**

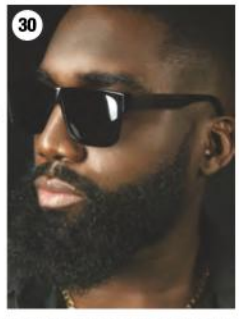
30. The **Bôhten** Legend 2018 Sunwear series is made from a fusion of reclaimed walnut, ebony and acetate sourced from the bottom of Lake Volta in Ghana. The line provides maximum comfort and a perfect travel accessory while protecting your eyes from harmful UV rays. Use code 'LG35' for 35% (expires 30/04/18) at **www.bohten.com** Athlete: C.O. Prime. Photographer/Agent: Michelle Aristocrat.

31. Swedish brand **Nala** was created in Eskilstuna in 2017. Affordable luxury is at the core of this young label; they create high-quality clothes designed to flatter different body shapes, paying a lot of attention to all aspects of the design. Visit **www.nala.se** to shop the range and follow on IG **@nala.se**

32. F R I ZZ t-shirts are a limited collection launching in SS 2018 by designer Myrna Gutierrez owner of **M A ^ E N Studio.** The T-shirts will feature expressive, abstract collage art mixing fashion, pop culture and typography. M A ^ E N Studio offers unique print and visual designs. Visit **www.maenstudio.work** or email **maenstudio.work@gmail.com**







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EASTER TREATS

Claire Pilton selects the sweetest chocolate-box cottages that transcend their traditionally humble origins

SHERRINGTON, WARMINSTER, WILTSHIRE
Cress Cottage dates from the 1720s and is Grade II listed. The dual-aspect kitchen/breakfast room and sitting/dining room – created from former cress beds – offer views over a cottage garden and village pond. Complete with a new two-bedroom annexe-barn, the guide price is £899,950. *Strutt & Parker: 01722 344011*

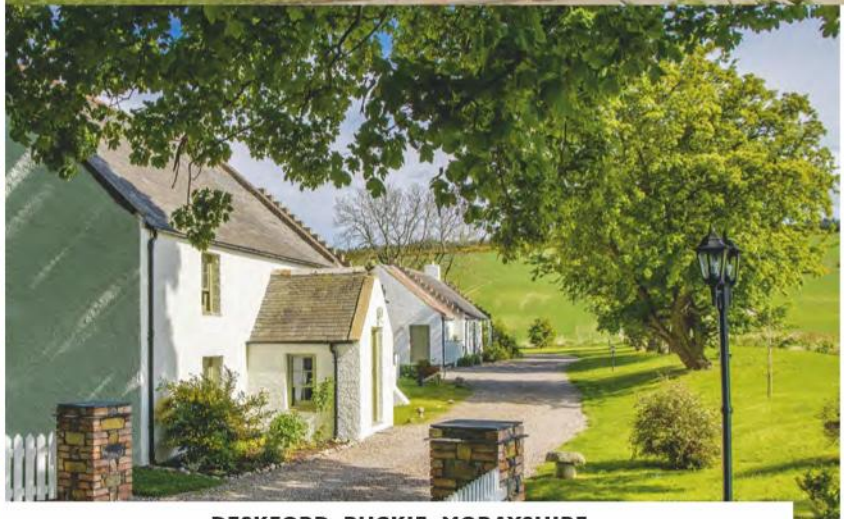
No architect designed the variegated rows of cottages that characterise the villages of Britain,' observes Matthew Rice in his book *Village Buildings of Britain*. 'We romanticise cottages for good reason; they are the true English idyll,' says Strutt & Parker's Freddie Dryden, who points to 'that instant feeling a cottage gives when you first walk through the door: the cosy atmosphere, wooden beams and inglenook fireplace. Somewhere warm to hide away in the winter, and, come the summer, a country garden teaming with flowers in which to laze away the temperate evenings with crickets and bees in the background.' A good pub within walking distance is a plus, adds Knight Frank's Damian Gray. 'Cottages often occupy prime locations in the heart of a village, so new owners can easily become part of the community' – particularly important for 'London weekenders' looking for a manageable property with a relatively low-maintenance garden. Last year, Knight Frank's Prime Country House Index showed the price growth for cottages was 2.6%, outperforming manor houses at -0.2%.

'Cottages are experiencing a surge in popularity,' observes Nick Leeming of Jackson-Stops. 'Our research shows they cost an average £607,465, which translates to £320 per square foot, compared to manor houses at £190 per square foot.' Weighing in at £322 per square foot, Walnut Tree Cottage in Mappowder, near Sturminster Newton in Dorset, is Grade II listed, thatched, has three bedrooms and costs £435,000. In Cornwall, Jackson-Stops is selling another listed, slightly larger three-bedroom cottage with river views over Flushing for £750,000; the village sports a sailing club, two pubs, a shop and quayside cafe, and is a ferry-ride from Falmouth. In Kingston, near Kingsbridge, Devon, £630,000 will secure a pair of Grade II sixteenth-century cottages through Marchand Petit; both are successful holiday lets, although an interconnecting door allows them to be used as a

LITTLE LONDON, HERTFORDSHIRE
Surrounded by countryside but well placed for Stansted and Bishop's Stortford, this sixteenth-century, thatched, three-bedroom cottage costs £885,000. It comes with a cart lodge/workshop with an office and playroom above; perfect for commuters who dream of working from home.
Savills: 01279 756800

TURVILLE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
Eight miles from Henley and High Wycombe, Turville is a well-known filming location for 'The Vicar of Dibley'. Situated opposite the twelfth-century village church, Windmill Cottage has three bedrooms, an exposed timber frame and beams and an inglenook fireplace. Yours for £685,000. *Knight Frank: 01491 844900*

Chocolate-box cottages are making a comeback in the rural market. The romance of open inglenook fireplaces and cottage gardens comes with a premium attached



DESKFORD, BUCKIE, MORAYSHIRE
An offer over £365,000 could see you residing in the 'Riviera of the North'. Blessed with beautiful beaches and the Scottish whisky trail on your doorstep, this Georgian gem comprises a four-bedroom house and one-bedroom cottage providing multi-generational living space and/or holiday lets – the permutations and pleasures are endless.
Savills: 01224 971110

five-bedroom house. Alternatively, 18 miles from Cambridge in Houghton, £650,000 could see you moving into Black Horse Cottage, a one-time pub between 1842 and 1850. Set within walled gardens, it has three bedrooms and three reception rooms and is available through Cheffins. 'Chocolate-box cottages are making a comeback in the rural market,' says Bruce King, director of residential sales at Cheffins. 'The romance of open inglenook fireplaces, exposed beams, bread ovens and cottage gardens comes with a premium attached.' Small wonder weekenders are competing with young couples and downsizers for these diminutive but indisputably idyllic and ever so English homes.

OKEFORD FITZPAINE, BLANDFORD, DORSET
Once the village inn, £725,000 Nutmeg Cottage features a fabulous kitchen/family room extension, and the self-contained fourth bedroom with a kitchenette and sitting room is ideal for B&B. The garden has an indoor pool where the current owners hold village swimming classes.
Humberts: 01258 452343

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CARIBBEAN FLAIR

A new development of luxurious, beach-side villas on the West Coast of Barbados is perfectly positioned to take in all the adventure and culture this vibrant island has to offer. Arta Ghanbari reports

STAR TREATMENT
Clockwise from top left: Looking onto the infinity pool and sea from the Great Room. The curved staircase up to the bedrooms. Villa Tamarindo is set right on the beach

On the West Coast of Barbados, otherwise known as Platinum Coast for its pristine warm waters, golden sand and world-class cuisine, a new star has arrived. The five-bedroom Villa Tamarindo, the first of four to be completed as part of the Beachlands enclave, was unveiled in December 2017 and marks an idyllic new bolthole from which to soak up life on this Caribbean hub.

As you step through the front doors and into the airy Great Room, your eyes are immediately drawn to the blues of the infinity pool, Caribbean Sea and endless sky beyond. This perfect view is no happy coincidence, rather the achievement of months of careful planning by architect Larry Warren, a legend in Barbados, whose practice is behind the design of most of the high-end homes built here in the last 15 years. 'Larry has got the levels exactly right, so when you're sitting in the living area, you can see the pool and the sea, but you don't see the people and no one can see you,' says James Burdess, director of Caribbean sales at Savills. The villa is also set back from the coast road, with mature mahogany trees, careful planting and plenty of space (the plot is 4,284 square metres) providing ultimate seclusion.

The interiors are the vision of Luca Bentoglio of AQA Studio, with details that surprise in every room. 'We've used the Bajan colonial style of the villa as a neutral canvas to convey some unexpected design elements,' he says. Take, for example, the main bedroom's bespoke oversize parquet panels in smoked oak, or the marble mosaic accent wall in the bathroom, where each piece was individually cut and manually assembled.

Part of the development of Beachlands involved investing $3.5 million on creating and sustaining the ecology of the site. As a result, an extra 25 feet of beach has been gained, and the reef has gone on to become part of the marine reserve area here, with fish and sea turtles in the water right outside the villa for residents to spot. There's also kitesurfing, paddleboarding, top-notch golf and polo, and on the slower side of things, Villa Tamarindo's position in Holetown means Sandy Lane (another Larry Warren design) and Limegrove are just 500 metres away. 'Besides its wonderful climate, what makes Barbados special for me is the Barbadians,' says James. 'Often you'll see a $15 million house next to a little wooden chalet, and everything exists in perfect harmony.'

Villa Tamarindo is on the market for $28 million. For more information, contact James Burdess at Savills (+44 (0)20 7016 3740; jburdess@savills.com) or Edward de Mallet Morgan at Knight Frank (+44 (0)20 7861 1553; Edward.deMalletMorgan@knightfrank.com)

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In a *special supplement*, Condé Nast Property shines a spotlight on the *key players* in the UK property scene – plus, the latest on an *exciting new development* in London. Read all about what's on our radar this spring

A luxurious home available through Russell Simpson

Centre Stage

PROPERTY | **PROMOTION**

Super-prime lettings

As demand for rentals increases, while people wait for the right opportunity to invest given the uncertain sales market, so too has the development of *ultra-luxurious new-build apartments*. London's Mr Super Prime, *Mark Tunstall*, only deals in the best in London's most exclusive addresses

***ALL PICTURES** Some of the super-luxurious prime London properties available to rent through Mark Tunstall, pictured inset with his colleague Murdi van Hien*

Dealing in only the most exceptional properties in London's most desirable postcodes, Mark Tunstall offers super-prime lettings to tenants from all over the world. In the wake of Brexit, as sales have slowed given the uncertainty following the EU referendum and increased stamp-duty levies, more and more people are looking to rent while waiting for the right moment to invest. The number of rental transactions above £5,000 per week in central London increased by over 41 per cent in 2017.

This demand has coincided with the completion of new-build, turnkey lateral apartments with a range of amenities (concierge, underground valet parking and health and leisure facilities) especially sought after by overseas clients used to this way of living back home. As tenants become increasingly global, spending less time in just one place, they demand homes serviced by 24-hour concierge and security when they are away. This is evident as, while the number of houses rented over the last two years has increased by 22 per cent, apartment lettings have increased by 57 per cent.

Exclusive areas such as Mayfair, until recently largely untouched by new residential developments, have been at the heart of these changes. 'Over time, Mayfair had become old hat and quality here lagged behind that available in neighbouring Knightsbridge,' says Mark. 'However, the residential scene is really starting to change.' Burlington Gate, the vision of Rogers Stirk Harbour, the firm behind One Hyde Park, is one of the exciting developments just completed in the area. 'Lateral living is highly coveted, as it allows open-plan spaces that London's terrace houses just can't offer,' says Mark. Another forthcoming scheme is Twenty Grosvenor Square, comprising 37 private residences, set to complete in 2018.

As Mark explains, the demand for top properties above £20,000 per week has also soared – there were seven transactions at this level just in the last year. With quality higher than ever before and an unparalleled range to suit all tastes and lifestyles, it's no surprise that demand is booming. 'People come to us knowing we have these aspirational properties, and the network of contacts to showcase the very best.'

For more information, call 020 3011 1775 or visit www.tunstallproperty.co.uk

The family agency

Offering some of the most *beautiful properties* in prime central London, *Russell Simpson* is a full-service, one-stop-shop agency run by Alan Russell and his family since 1979. Combine its *personal flair, individual approach and innovative ideas* and you have a team that moves with the times without ever compromising quality

Since opening shop nearly 40 years ago in Chelsea, Russell Simpson has remained one of the top residential estate agents in prime central London. Founded and still run by Alan Russell, who is now joined by four of his children, this family-run business has established a repertoire for offering some of the most highly coveted properties within Chelsea and its surrounding areas. The agency offers a full service, including sales, lettings and management. 'We are fortunate to deal with some incredibly beautiful properties, from artists' studios to one-off mansions,' says Leo Russell.

Russell Simpson has built up a trusted reputation among locals and its international clients, based on nurtured relationships. Case in point is the fact that about 75 per cent of its business comes through referrals and repeat clients. Flat sales transactions have also increased year-on-year for the past five years, and despite the weaker market this department achieved its most successful year ever in 2017. This is the result of the personal, tailored approach the team brings to each property that comes through the door. 'Every property we sell, let or manage requires a slightly different strategy,' says Jake Russell. 'We like to consider the transaction from the purchaser or tenant's perspective and then create the marketing strategy suited to that audience.'

Russell Simpson is currently benefiting from the merging of two generations, combining the best parts of an old-school agency with the most up-to-date progressive and digital options which its clients are starting to demand. 'The prime central London market has some interesting years ahead of it with some disruptive technologies coming into the fray,' says Hermione Russell. 'We have the goal of maintaining our long-lasting reputation within Chelsea while on the hunt for continual improvement.' Selling or letting your family home can involve a lot of emotional attachment, and often requires a sensitive approach. Being a family business, the team behind Russell Simpson understands the sensitivity of this transition as you downsize or embrace a new chapter, and the care this process requires.

For more information, call 020 7225 0277 or visit www.russellsimpson.co.uk. Follow @russellsimpsonhomes on Instagram to be inspired by the latest properties

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT (l–r) Alan Russell, pictured with Hermione, Jake, Bertie and Leo. Examples of two stunning properties recently on Russell Simpson's books

Lasting legacy

History has proven that *Savills won't be beat* when it comes to *super-prime properties* in central London. Considering its long heritage, *bespoke approach* and team of specialists with over 300 years of collective experience, its lasting success is no surprise

The internationally renowned Savills brand, with its instantly recognisable logo in yellow and red, has been 163 years in the making. Now with more than 700 offices around the world, from the Americas and Europe to Africa, the Middle East and Asia, Savills is the leading real-estate agency dealing in high-end properties in the most desirable addresses. In London, its Sloane Street shop is the longest established residential office in prime central, where a team of 10 specialists offer 300 years of collective experience to their clients. If you couple that with the history of Savills itself, you won't find another agency that has this level of knowledge within one team.

A pivotal key to Savills' success is the longevity of its relationships, whether that be with a client that an agent has known personally for 20 years, or a commercial client from the office in Shanghai who feels part of the Savills family and looks to the team in London for the best buy here. 'We always give what we believe is the best advice and I think if you do that, people will stay with you. We pride ourselves in knowing many lawyers and advisors and have relationships with those types of people in the industry,' says Richard Dalton, a chartered surveyor who has been working in the industry for 29 years and at Savills for 13 years. Positivity and initiative are key to the approach: the ethos of the team is always to find a way to get something done.

Heading the houses department is Richard Gutteridge, who has been an agent in London for 25 years, and at Savills for eight years. 'We have a dedicated house team, and a dedicated flat team. We all work together while each having our area of focus,' he says. Working alongside him are Izzy Birch Reynardson, who heads super-prime lettings, as well as James Gilbert-Green, who recently joined the Sloane Street team and works on both flat and house sales. This approach allows the team to provide a bespoke, hands-on service to every client, especially in this increasingly global market, and London's challenging one of late. 'It's tougher to grow market share in a weaker market, but that's exactly what we've done,' says Gutteridge.

Take, for example, the recent exchange on a property in Belgravia's prestigious Eaton Square with a client from Western Europe. This was a property that had been on the market for over two years, one of a handful of flats to sell for above £5,000 a square foot, all of which have been sold by Savills. 'We dominate Eaton Square,' says Dalton. 'Our market share is unrivalled.' What's more, the buyer wanted to know everything about the property, and Savills was involved in the agreement of every single detail of the transaction and lease extension, advising on the structure of the contract, history of the building and history of the square

Bottom row from left: Alex Christian, Izzy Birch Reynardson, Johnny Fuller, Richard Gutteridge and Charles Lloyd. Top row from left: Ben Morris, Richard Dalton, James Gilbert-Green, Noel De Keyzer and Barbara Allen

ALUN CALLENDER

itself. 'Transaction after transaction, we really embrace the level of detail we're involved with,' Dalton adds.

With many high-profile and discreet overseas buyers, a huge advantage is Savills' international offices, which allows the team to fly out and meet with clients face to face anywhere from India to China to put out a listing, close a deal or simply offer advice. 'In order to list a property, I flew to Hong Kong for 48 hours and no other agent sat in front of the potential client. He wasn't coming back to London to list it, so by sitting in front of him, Savills got the listing and then we eventually sold it,' says Gutteridge. As he explains, this broad-shouldered approach is necessary when you have someone either selling their most expensive asset and wanting to maximise value, or someone who is about to spend an awful lot of money. 'Ultimately, it's about looking someone in the eye and just telling them what you do and how you can help.' Easy does it.

To contact the Savills prime central London team, visit www.savills.co.uk or call 020 7730 0822

Community spirit

Comprising *over 3,000 elegant new homes*, enclosed within *beautiful landscaped gardens* and overlooking the neighbouring parklands, this exciting *new development* situated in Colindale, north-west London, is just a stone's throw from the city centre, and has something to suit everyone

Set within 48 acres, Colindale Gardens gives residents the best of both worlds – a quiet, leafy escape, within a buzzing community atmosphere – all just a 30-minute tube journey from central London. As James Holmear, sales director of developer Redrow, says, 'Colindale Gardens is unique compared to other city-centre regeneration and new development schemes.' A particularly rare advantage of the development is that Colindale Gardens will have a primary school on site. Set up in partnership with the Saracens Rugby Education Trust, and due to be finished by September next year, the school will be able to facilitate up to 600 pupils. Being well within the catchment area, the children of Colindale Gardens will enjoy priority for the coveted school places.

Further contributing to the community atmosphere that distinguishes this attractive development is its appeal to such a wide range of buyers. Unusually for such a luxurious London development, Colindale Gardens will contain over 3,000 homes. There is a wide selection of properties on offer to suit locals keen to downsize, young families and investors alike, including comfortable studios and one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, each with its own private balcony or terrace. Colindale Gardens will have an additional 'family quarter' of spacious townhouses, all of which have their own private garden, and afford stunning views over the development's main park area. Coming soon and adding to the vibrant sense of community will be a pedestrian square with a range of shops, restaurants and cafes situated within the development.

This residential area of north-west London offers an idyllic escape from the bustling city centre. With eight acres of landscaped gardens and a four-acre central park, Colindale Gardens holds much appeal to any buyer on the lookout for extra outdoor space. The peaceful areas on the grounds include walkways, cycle paths, play areas, large open grass areas, and quiet corners with planting and trees – complete with interior-designed shared areas and feature lighting. With its 250 acres of rolling fields and woods to enjoy, Fryent Country Park is also nearby, as is Hampstead Heath, which offers stunning London views, as well as outdoor swimming in its many lidos and ponds. For keen sports players, the development makes a fantastic location, with plenty of playing fields situated within the local area, and for rugby fans, Allianz Park, the home of Saracens rugby, is close at hand.

Although Colindale Gardens is surrounded by an abundance of green space, it has been especially designed to suit modern city living. It has excellent transport connections, with the nearest Tube stop a handy 100 metres from the development. Colindale station is a designated Night Tube stop, so there's no need to rush back from working or socialising in central London. Alternatively, residents can reach Kings Cross from nearby Mill Hill Broadway Thameslink station in just 20 minutes.

Property owners will enjoy underground parking, and a 24-hour concierge service, which makes it easy for residents to simply 'lock up and leave'. An essential residents-only gym, steam room and sauna is also included, as well as a designated 'flexispace' which can be hired out – perfect for hosting children's birthdays, teaching classes, or even holding meetings. With beautiful interiors, each property will be finished to a high specification. There is a selection of three neutral colour palettes to choose from, enabling residents to move straight in and decorate as they please, and the well-appointed kitchens will have Siemens appliances and wood flooring. The bedrooms offer luxurious carpets as well as fitted wardrobes, and the elegantly designed bathrooms will have porcelain tiles.

The neighbouring areas of Brent Cross and Cricklewood recently benefitted from a £4 billion investment, making Colindale Gardens both a sound and an intelligent purchase. Brought to the market by Redrow, one of London's premium residential developers, this ongoing project has already received great interest from many prospective buyers, and early viewings are strongly advised.

Prices from £370,000 | For more information visit www.redrow.co.uk or call 020 3553 1601

BELOW Colindale Gardens is close to Hampstead Heath. OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP The development will have landscaped gardens and a central park. The properties suit a wide range of buyers, including families. Interiors will be designed with neutral palettes. Kitchens will have wood flooring and Siemens appliances

Luxury residence management

With a *starry portfolio* of projects such as Finchatton's Kingwood and Northacre's No 1 Palace Street, *Rhodium* works to realise the vision behind London's *most impressive new-build developments* in some of the most enviable postcodes across the capital

For more information, visit www.numberonepalacestreet.com

TOP LEFT Rhodium founder Dean Main. BOTTOM RIGHT A private residence managed by Rhodium

Speaking from his Mayfair office, Rhodium's founder Dean Main says he 'couldn't possibly have predicted' how well Rhodium has done. Indeed, the property management company has enjoyed a 'meteoric rise' since its founding seven years ago.

With a focus on new-build super-prime developments in desirable areas such as Mayfair, Chelsea and Belgravia, Rhodium is involved in some of the capital's most ambitious schemes, including No 1 Grosvenor Square, Chiltern Place and No 1 Palace Street. As Main unreservedly reveals, 'We turn away more business than we take on.' Working with developers from conception stage, Rhodium carefully sets out to realise their vision, starting by ensuring developments operate at the highest level both front and back of house, before examining the finer details – from the layout of a Pilates studio to the size of a parking space.

The company is part owned by the Monaco royal family and comprises a portfolio of £10 billion, with each apartment it manages worth on average £15 million, giving the company a unique client base of ultra-high-net-worth buyers from both the UK and abroad. As such, Rhodium undertakes 'lifestyle requests', servicing its clients' every whim. 'If you're in your apartment and need tickets to the opera, or even just a restaurant booking, you simply call the concierge downstairs and they will look after you,' explains Main. The company also provides bespoke event services, from rustling up a pony for a children's birthday party to chartering a private jet, and has an additional team that deals with 'high level requests'. Always one step ahead, it has recently been introducing its clients to education consultants who can assist their children with getting into the country's top universities.

With continuity, security, discretion and trust at the heart of what Rhodium does, it is no surprise that the company is equally meticulous when it comes to staff. Such is the level of detail, it even has its own team of float concierges on hand, in plain branded suits, to cover holidays or absences. Most employees are from a hospitality or hotel background: 'We are targeting the finest talent not only throughout the UK but also around the world, recruiting individuals who have worked for five-star hotels and really understand the delivery of luxury service,' says Main. And from the security team to the cleaners, he has met every single one.

For more information, visit www.rh-45.com

Round-up

A look at the people and places making waves in the world of London property, from an exciting new major development to the best ultra-luxurious bespoke properties and exclusive lettings

1 LASTING LEGACY:
Savills
Championing Savills' lasting legacy as a leading real-estate agency, the team at the Sloane Street shop offers 300 years of collective experience to clients looking to buy, sell and let some of the most desirable properties in prime central London.

2 THE FAMILY AGENCY:
Russell Simpson
Having set up shop in SW3 nearly 40 years ago, this family-run agency remains a trusted go-to for the most beautiful homes in Chelsea and its surrounding areas (including the stylish house shown here), and combines old-school values with a modern, progressive outlook.

3 LUXURY RESIDENCE MANAGEMENT:
Rhodium
Founded seven years ago by Dean Main, Rhodium works to realise the vision behind high-profile developments such as Chiltern Place and No 1 Palace Street (pictured), ensuring that they operate to the highest level and offering a bespoke service that caters to every whim of its ultra-high-net-worth clients.

4 COMMUNITY SPIRIT:
Colindale Gardens
This brand-new development by Redrow, set within 48 acres of landscaped gardens in north-west London, offers residents the benefit of living in a tranquil, leafy neighbourhood while being only a 30-minute Tube ride from the bustle of central London. Perfect for downsizers, young families and investors alike, the units range from studios to townhouses.

5 SUPER-PRIME LETTINGS:
Tunstall Property
When it comes to lettings, Mark Tunstall, London's Mr Super Prime, has a sharp eye for luxury and style (as seen in the home pictured here), plus access to exclusive properties that wouldn't otherwise be found on the market. Currently on his books are a string of highly anticipated developments in Mayfair, including Burlington Gate and Twenty Grosvenor Square.

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NOTEBOOK

A monthly round-up of property news at home and abroad

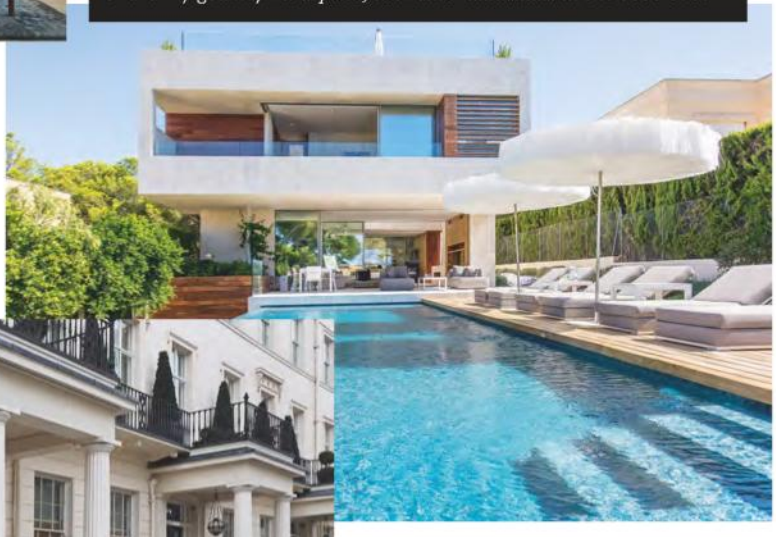
BY VIRGINIA PECK

ISLAND ESCAPE

Lying at the end of a leafy cul-de-sac in Old Bendinat, one of Mallorca's most desirable addresses, this modern five-bedroom villa was designed by the renowned architect Osvaldo Luppi. Just a 20-minute drive from the airport at Palma, and within walking distance of a peaceful sandy beach, the luxurious property has an open-plan kitchen, breakfast terrace, pool and sauna, and is equally suitable as either a primary home or a family getaway. *For enquiries, call Barnes International on 020 7935 5797*

WHERE THE ART IS

Picasso once said, 'The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls,' and surely no home is complete without a selection of carefully chosen paintings that reflect its owner's personality and tastes. For those who need a little curation help, prime property management company Bruton has launched SmartArt. Using a network of insider contacts, and the expertise of some of the world's leading museums and auction houses, the service gives expert advice on everything from insurance to display and valuation. *For more information, visit www.brutonofsloanestreet.co.uk*



MOVE AND SHAKE

Buying and selling property can be a tricky business, but property search and acquisition service Warnerheath is on hand to provide tailored advice in a discreet and friendly manner. Using a network of contacts and insider knowledge of some of London's finest prime residential properties in areas such as Chelsea and Belgravia, this boutique service guides clients every step of the way, from carrying out tough negotiations to securing a purchase. *For more information, visit www.warnerheath.com*

ON LOCATION

Just a short distance from the rolling Surrey Hills, Willowbank makes for an idyllic family home. The property, by developers Octagon, offers five bedrooms and five reception rooms, a supper room, formal dining room, private study and playroom. Perfect for summer parties, the impressive kitchen, complete with a temperature-controlled wine fridge, opens on to the spacious back lawn. The bustling local village of Cobham is filled with numerous pubs, restaurants and cafes, and a direct train connects with London Waterloo in 40 minutes. £4.35 million. *For enquiries, contact Knight Frank on 01932 591600*

LIVING THE HIGH LIFE

Looking for a stylish London penthouse? Telford Homes has unveiled the highly anticipated Manhattan Plaza in Canary Wharf, inspired by New York's fashionable Meatpacking District. Each penthouse has panoramic views and is decorated in contemporary style, and residents can also enjoy a 24-hour concierge service and a large roof terrace. Telford has additional penthouses available in up-and-coming Stratford and at its Horizons development, also in Canary Wharf. *For further information, visit www.telfordhomes.london*

JONATHAN HEAF IS...

Out to lunch!

...with **Sir Michael Parkinson**

The tables turn as Britain's greatest interviewer talks Woody Allen, women and regret at **The Royal Oak**

Have you read Tina Brown's *The Vanity Fair Diaries* yet? If not, what the hell have you been doing? Watching *Black Mirror*? Oh, please. Doom-mongering introspection is so last year. The book is worth it for the shoulder pads and power lunches alone, of which there are a staggering number per page, even by New York standards.

Brown's diaries are just like the *Vanity Fair* she edited: highly intelligent, outrageously entertaining and deliciously incendiary, with at least one waltzing president and first lady. Cynics are calling Brown's book fake(ish) news and wondering whether some entries weren't embellished in hindsight for topicality, not least when a certain pussy-grabbing real estate oik swaggers into view.

Still, who cares? No harm in a little luminous reverie for the sake of a killer anecdote, right? And anyway, who's to say otherwise? Him? Her? Seeing as the author doesn't drink – early on, Brown claimed to have an allergy to alcohol – she probably remembers this period (1983-92) better than most. (Wasn't everyone else on Quaaludes and Diet Coke?) With her signature gossipy cut'n'thrust, Brown claims no dinner guest is worth more than 25 minutes' conversation. "No one has more than that to give, in my view," Brown bites, "unless they are having an affair with the person next to them."

The art of conversation is something Sir Michael Parkinson dwells upon over lunch at The Royal Oak in Maidenhead, which he co-owns with his son Nick. Parky, now 82, has made a six-decade career out of conversing with the good (Robert Redford, Helen Mirren, David Beckham), the bad (Emu, George Best) and the GOATs (Muhammad Ali) of this world. All right for the son of a Yorkshire miner who went to war (Suez, 1956) carrying a Remington typewriter rather than a standard-issue rifle.

From Parky's days as a features writer at the *Daily Express* and the *Manchester Guardian* to joining Granada Television, where he began a run as the nation's smoothest interrogator, he might be considered the British Carl Bernstein to Sir David Frost's Bob Woodward. Sure, Parky's softly-softly interview technique has been less "follow the money" – as Deep Throat once advised – than "follow the book plug", but that doesn't mean he shied away from asking uncomfortable questions when required.

"Not to get too fancy about it," he notes after we order cold white wine and warm white fish, "but I always believed in the art of the interview. To get the answer you want, it can be like landing a plane. Sometimes you need to play the long game. Take Woody Allen. Now, when he came on [in 1999], he was huge news. The scandal was raging. Still, I couldn't just come out and ask him if he'd slept with such and such a person, could I?"

Was the host warned by Allen's team not to go there? "Of course. His agent insisted she'd pull him off the show if I asked about his personal controversies – but there's more than one way to skin a rabbit. I asked whether any of the press furore had affected his work. Bingo. He didn't like it, we didn't become friends, but he responded. [Afterwards], he asked the BBC to cut certain parts. They refused."

Ah, for the days of a silver-haired Parkinson gently grilling an alleged child molester on national television, the squirming soundtracked by the BBC Big Band. Since host Jon Stewart turned the US chat show into a satirical podium that not only responds to the news but also governs the news cycle, one might forgive British audiences for despairing of our own primetime talk shows. Channel-hopping between the high-energy, PR-driven schmaltz of Graham Norton and the lowbrow banter of Jonathan Ross doesn't quite cut it, does it? It's no wonder Netflix is now worth over £70 billion.

Who, for example, could take on Harvey Weinstein? "You would have to stop yourself from punching him first," chuckles Parkinson. "Maybe someone like Piers [Morgan]? He's a very good journalist. You need someone who doesn't have an off button." Would Parky take on Trump? "You'd have to walk away. How can someone that daft not be ill?"

So, as I'm the one asking the questions, what conversational plane do I want to land over lunch today? Here's one: as a man in today's climate is there anything that Parkinson wouldn't do again? "Men are in a quandary. I mean, certainly if I was doing now what I did then, I would have to watch myself. I could get arrested. But there isn't a man of a certain age who doesn't look back and wonder, 'Was my behaviour entirely appropriate?' There was a bar on Fleet Street [where] women were treated disgracefully, like second-class citizens. It was woefully un-PC."

'If I did now what I did then, I could get arrested'

Any personal regrets, Sir Michael? "Oh, no. I used to try to kiss Shirley MacLaine whenever I could... An outrageous flirt. That said, I regret not doing something to an editor – who shall remain nameless, for now – who exposed himself to my wife, at my house, no less." Really? Did you throw him out? "No. I should have, shouldn't I?" Parky smiles that warm, disarming smile and orders a decaf Americano. "It's a wonderful thing hindsight, isn't it?" **GQ**

The Royal Oak Paley Street, Littlefield Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3JN. 01628 620541. theroyaloakpaleystreet.com. Sir Michael Parkinson: Our Kind Of Music – The Great American Songbook is out now.

VERDICT Conversation ★★★★★ Exposé ★★★☆☆ Banter ★★☆☆☆ Interrogation ★★★☆☆ Deflection ★☆☆☆☆ **Overall** ★★★★☆

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